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A

# REUNION

## MINISTERS AND CHURCHES,

HELD AT

Gardnersville, May 14-17, 1881.

"UNITY OF SPIRIT."

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PUBLISHED FOR THE COMPILERS.

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## PREFACE.

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### A RE-UNION.

THE character and design of the occasion which called forth the sentiments and reminiscences contained in this unpretentious little volume, are sufficiently indicated in the following quotations from the Programme:

"This gathering is intended to embrace all ministers and churches whose relations to this Church and community have been such as to make it a matter of interest for them to be personally or representatively present on the occasion.

"The object will be to refresh the memories and revive the associations of other years; to rescue from hopeless oblivion the yet available fragments of local history, especially the facts of religious development, church extension, and important biographical reminiscences; and to blend the experiences of the past and present, as a means of instruction and encouragement for the future.

"In aiming at this object, all who are to participate are respectfully requested to be loyal to truth and right; to be fair and faithful to realities and tendencies;

cies ; to be kind, generous, magnanimous, to all persons and parties ; to keep the object constantly and distinctly in view ; and yet no one will be expected to stultify himself by any narrowness of thought, feeling, or utterance, as if a sensitive conservatism demanded restraint or sacrifice."

## HISTORICAL FIDELITY.

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"HE that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

Our Hartwick brethren, in their "Memorial," have left us, in our *Re-union*, a single alternative—to correct, or to silently acquiesce in their inaccuracies. Fidelity and justice to all concerned require that some of the statements of that publication, which bear upon us, should be noticed. Of the work as a whole nothing needs to be said. We have no wish to detract an iota from its merits. Nothing but self-defence, by placing truth within the reach of all who care to understand it, will here be attempted.

1. The Memorial assumes that both the Hartwick and Franckean Synods were *irregularly* inaugurated, because the ministers by whom they were organized did not obtain "letters of dismission" from the ecclesiastical bodies of which they had been members. This is a grave charge, expressed by an equiv-

ocal term. Doubtless the writer had in his own mind some idea of *order*, from which the proceedings in question were thought to be a digression. And no one will dispute his right to hold or to declare such an opinion. But so me of his readers may venture to inquire whether the distinguished gentlemen who founded those Synods were not as competent to judge respecting regularity as he is; and whether it is either courteous or just to set up an individual opinion, unsupported by any pretence of authority, as a standard of condemnation against so large a number—one against more than a score—and that, too, in a treatise of historical interest, may well be doubted. The general question of regularity will not be discussed. There are cases in which it is invested with sacred importance. There are instances in which it is shamefully abused. And there are occurrences respecting which the thought of regularity is ridiculously absurd. Our author may classify the proceedings under review as he pleases. But before we bow in silent acquiescence to his wholesale assumption, we shall be glad to have him name a single instance in the entire history of pro-

gressive organizations, in which persons leaving one association to found another for reformatory purposes, ever asked or received letters of dismission.

Did Christ and the Apostles? Did Luther and his associate Reformers?

2. The Memorial assumes that the founders of the Franckean Synod were "*hasty and inconsiderate*" in this movement, "inasmuch" as they were active in the session of the Hartwick Synod of 1836, while it "does not appear from the records," except a certain specified resolution, that there existed any cause for "alienation." And in a similarly assumptive manner, it is stated that there could have been no reasons for a separation arising from differences of opinion respecting revivals, temperance, etc., because the Hartwick Synod "had planted itself unequivocally upon the *total abstinence* pledge, and in nearly all the congregations total abstinence societies had been organized." Our author does not say whence he obtained his information on this subject; but it seems likely that here again he had recourse to the "records." And as these several topics must be disposed of in a group, it may

as well be said respecting all, that such conclusions, derived from exclusively such sources, are entirely out of place in what purports to be authentic history. Of course, no ingenuous mind would question the credibility of the "records" of ecclesiastical bodies, unless falsification might be sustained by overwhelming testimony. And so, too, family records may be presumed to be reliable. But is it likely that family quarrels will be registered in family records? What credit would a historian be entitled to who declared without qualification that no domestic broils had ever disturbed the peace of a given family; and gave as his reason for the declaration that the records of that family contained no traces of strife, or of causes leading to it? Just as much credit, and no more, as our author is entitled to, when he assumes that the Minutes of Synods indicate the measure of discord or harmony prevalent among their members. A member of the Hartwick Synod, just returned from the meeting of that body at West Camp, stated within the last hour that certain proceedings were *not* to appear in the Minutes, because at some future time they might be used to the injury of the party con-

cerned. And certainly the body may be commended for prudence in acting so thoughtfully. But if the future historian is controlled by the precedents of our author, he will confidently assert that upon the subject in question no difference of opinion existed.

Now, the simple truth is, and it is abundantly capable of proof, that such became the deeply rooted divergencies of conviction and purpose among the members of that body at that time, and that, too, respecting the very means and movements to which allusion has been made, that continued co-operation in good faith was an impracticability. And the antagonistic elements which had been multiplying and strengthening for years, were brought into final and fatal collision in the session of 1836, the very session in which our author finds no appearances of "alienation." The existing dissatisfactions and "alienations" had not, indeed, been spread out upon the "records," but they were, nevertheless, sources of serious and ceaseless embarrassment. The President was elected during that session with a view to conciliation. And immediately after the organization, the memorable anti-slavery paper which was pre-

sented called forth a flourish of weapons, by which the timid were terrified. This was the decisive moment. The disposition made of that paper was the "last straw which broke the camel's back." Controversy ended; but it was succeeded by a lull, which clearly enough portended the coming storm. The idea of reformation was abandoned, because it was felt that the time for revolution had come.

But our motto is "*Historical Fidelity.*" Accordingly, let us leave no room for misapprehension respecting a matter of so much moment. More was true of the Hartwick Synod, and of the churches within its bounds, than the "Memorial" claims for them, especially respecting temperance. All the ministers were the friends of this good cause, and a large proportion of them were its ardent advocates. And so, too, there were not only societies existing within the limits of all the congregations, but there were among the members not a few earnest temperance workers. And yet it must be said that our author's conclusion from such facts, that differences of opinion respecting temperance could have afforded no reason for separation, is as groundless as the "baseless fabri-

of a vision." Said the pastor, of one of the churches, "I have seven deacons, all of whom get drunk." That was probably the only church of which such a statement could have been truthfully made. But then cases of intoxication among church members were not infrequent. And just here came the issue. On the one hand it was claimed that drunkenness was a sin, and should be treated as such—that it should be a bar to the communion—a just cause for excommunication; while on the other hand, practically, and as a matter of public instruction, it was held that temperance must not be allowed to disturb the peace of the churches. Said the President of the body, "We must keep temperance out of our churches."

And in a manner more or less similar, every topic mentioned, and others besides, furnished reasons for the deprecated rupture. Whether those reasons, subjected to thorough scrutiny, would justify the movement to which they contributed, is a question not here to be decided. The only point insisted upon is that our author's attempts to show that the movement was "hasty and inconsiderate," utterly fail to sustain his conclusion.

3. The "confessional" matter, in view of the inherent importance of the subject, the indefiniteness of its treatment, and its well nigh limitless implications, might seem to demand most serious attention. In reality, however, it amounts to nearly nothing. From the first sensational thrill to this last attempt to throw historical sanction around the charge that the Franckean Synod from its organization had assailed the Augsburg Confession, the whole controversy grew out of and was carried on by misapprehension and misrepresentation. The real and the only difference between the Synods respecting this document, from the first and all the way through, was *not* whether as properly understood it was doctrinally objectionable, but whether it was not objectionably liable to be misunderstood. Precisely this liability the Franckean Synod sought to avoid by the articles adopted, and the Hartwick Synod endeavored to guard against precisely the same liability by the "Notes" which were published shortly after. This is the true state of the case, and this is the whole of it. The only real "confessional" question which ever existed between the two Synods, was the great denomi-

national question agitating the Church everywhere, whether a change of phraseology is not preferable to perpetual ambiguity. That the pressure was felt elsewhere as well as here, the "Recension of the Augsburg Confession," the "Definite Platform," any number of Church Declarations, and almost ceaseless controversy, are surely sufficient proof.

And now, if the reader inquires how it was possible for intelligent men to mistake a difference of opinion upon a question of propriety for a difference of doctrine, the answer will not be difficult. If our author, at this late day, contemplating the subject from the grave standpoint of a historian, has been thus misled, it is surely not surprising that the parties, during the heat of the excitement, should mutually have given occasion for such misapprehension.

4. Surprise has its limits. And it may well be asked, whether the point has not been reached beyond which blunders cease to excite surprise. If the reader's susceptibilities still hold out, he may, perhaps, realize an additional sensation by reading what our author says about the final defection of all but one of the

founders of the Franckean Synod. Only the charity which "believeth all things," will discern in these statements any but a motive to fix reproach upon the organization to which they relate. And they are the more to be deprecated, because it is well nigh impossible to meet accusations against the departed, without disturbing the feelings of surviving friends. But this sad necessity is a common experience. And those who are least responsible for the wrongs which are supposed to exist, not unfrequently are most outraged by the unscrupulous attempts made to taint the reputation or the memory of those upon whom they are falsely charged. But whoever suffers when truth is assailed, it must be vindicated. And if it was the author's aim to crowd the largest number of inaccuracies in the smallest space, the paragraph before us may be cited as a rare example of success. And yet it contains some truth. It is true that "Rev. John D. Lawyer was, in after years, deposed by that body for heresy." And it is just as true that Rev. John D. Lawyer for years, while a member of the Hartwick Synod, cherished the same heresy without being deposed. Whether those who

use, or those against whom they are used, are most injured when such weapons are called in requisition, the reader may be left to decide. This retort is befitting, not only because it is merited, but because it discloses the fact. And yet justice must be done to the Hartwick Synod. John D. Lawyer went into that body as heretical as he went out of it; as heretical as he was when he was deposed by the Franckean Synod. He never was sound in the faith. For more than a decade, in three different Synods, he held, and to some extent sought to propagate, his heresies without disturbance. And yet our author would stigmatize the origin and history of the body by which the false doctrines of this man were ferreted out, by opprobriously bringing to view his deposition!

It is true, too, that Rev. L. Swackhamer returned to and died a member of the Hartwick Synod. And what of that? Was it discreditable to him or to the body of which he had been a member, to transfer his relations to that Synod after he had taken charge of a church within its bounds? Have our brethren abandoned the rule about which they have been so sensitive and so strenuous? There were, in-

deed, other features of the last experiences of this dear brother, which entitle his memory to very different treatment from that it has received in the "Memorial." And as for Rev. W. Ottman, the admission charged upon him has not the semblance of truth in it. Nothing is more certain than that he remained a firm and ardent friend of the Synod to the end of his life.

Rev. P. Wieting was well enough known in and beyond the bounds of both synods, and it is sufficiently sure that his worth will be perpetuated by other means, so that no patronizing eulogy was needed in such a work as the Memorial.

And it is strange that the wisdom of silence respecting unappreciated merit is not more frequently exemplified. But if discretion is as rare as accuracy, were it not for the protest of truth to the contrary, it might be a relief to accept even superfluous compliments without discount. A NESTOR in the body of which he was a member, this venerable man indeed was, but for very different reasons than those for which this classic name is applied to him by our author. He did *not* lead his synod as a

body into the General Synod. He favored the movement, but he neither originated nor controlled it. That movement was thoroughly discussed during several sessions, and the final action was taken with considerable unanimity. It was not carried by management nor by personal influence. But if there was one member who was more earnest and decided than others were in favor of it, that member was *not Rev. P. Weiting*, but *Rev. N. Van Alstine*.

5. Of course, the late "efforts to effect an organic union" between the two Synods required our author's attention. And, as might have been expected, he assumes that those efforts failed "through the want of proper action on the part" of the Franckean Synod.

This assumption, it must be confessed, seems much more plausible than its antecedents. The records, at least, do favor it. But things are not always what they seem. The "records" in this matter, no more than in others, contain all the facts. There are indisputable facts outside of the "records" which place the failure in a very different light. The question has been asked whether the entire movement did not originate in the idea of *management*. But,

however that may have been, it is certain that while there was no failure of favorable "action" on the part of the Hartwick Synod, there was practical hostility to the ostensible object contemplated by the union. Purposes were indicated far less loving in their aspects than were the resolutions passed; far more in accordance with the spirit and sentiments which pervade the "Memorial," as also other more recent developments.

To those whose information has been wholly derived from the "records," it doubtless must appear that the failure to effect a union was due to the manner in which the matter was disposed of by the Franckean Synod. But whoever has felt interest enough in the history of that movement to examine it thoroughly, will inevitably be led to the following conclusions: *First*, that the Hartwick Synod, whether they desired it or not, were not prepared for it. *Second*, that if the Franckean Synod evinced any aversion to the union, it arose from the conviction that if effected, it would only be a union in name. *Third*, that however desirable such a union might be, however certain that it must ultimately be

brought about, the time for its consummation had not yet come.

6. Great prominence is given in the "Memorial" to the evils connected with and growing out of the *litigation* in which, subsequent to the organization of the Franckean Synod, a number of churches were involved. The idea is carried, and evidently was intended to be carried, that for all those evils this body was to blame. And clearly the decisions of the courts are relied on to justify this conclusion. We shall have nothing to say here respecting the right or the wrong of these decisions. But against the assumption that the edict of a civil tribunal is to be in any sense regarded as a standard of moral rectitude, a decided protest is entered. The principle is not only ridiculous—it is monstrous. Jesus Christ was condemned by the highest civil authority, and so was Martin Luther. And it is at least supposable that modern courts are capable of equal outrages upon right and justice.

No disposition is felt to defend the one body, or to criminate the other, so far as that unfortunate litigation was concerned. But our author's logic in arriving at his conclusion

needs a passing notice. It reminds one of what was frequently said during the war of the rebellion, that all the blood and treasure expended in that dread struggle might have been avoided, if the North had simply allowed the South to have her own way. Very likely. It is, indeed, quite probable that if the supremacy of the slave power had been conceded, the Union might have been preserved without the war. And so, too, might the Church of Rome have remained undisturbed by the revolutions of the sixteenth century, if our great Reformer had not assailed its corruptions. Now, our author is indeed a Southern man; and yet we will do him the justice to believe, that in that great sectional contest he was not so blinded as to blame the North for all the evils of the war. But respecting the subject before us, upon which he has so assumptively expressed himself, it is not easy, if indeed it is possible, to exonerate him from absurdities equally ridiculous.

7. The "Historical Address" alone has been under review. Our author was the chosen historian of the body to do this work. It was delivered before the Synod, and indorsed by

it. Accordingly the Synod, as such, is responsible for what it contains. It may seem strange, and it is very strange, that such inaccuracies should have been published to the world with such indorsement. There is, however, an explanation, and in the judgment of charity, the only one which can be suggested from the nature of the case. It certainly is entitled to some consideration, both as to its bearings upon the author and upon the Synod.

The writer had no personal knowledge of the affairs about which he wrote, as at the time they occurred he was a resident of another and a distant part of the country—South Carolina. Since he has been a member of the Hartwick Synod, his associations and his means of information have been mainly limited to that body. And it is confidently believed that had such a work as the "Memorial" been written by either of the venerable men who controlled its counsels during the days of synodical strife, it would have been pervaded by less partisan feeling and purpose than characterize the present volume.

And now about the Synod. As the members have made themselves responsible for

the work done by their historian, if there are any extenuating circumstances, they are entitled to the benefit of them.

Of the body as constituted when the "Historical Address" was delivered, there was but *one* member who was on the ground and in condition to have anything like a full and fair understanding of that ecclesiastical contest at the time it occurred. For this statement absolute certainty is not claimed, yet it is confidently believed to be correct. All but that *one* have since become members of the body. No inconsiderable portion of them are immigrants from other states, while a decided majority of the balance were at that time not even novitiates in the sacred profession.

These facts respecting the author and the Synod do certainly afford an explanation of the errors noticed, but whether they are to be accepted as a palliation or not, the reader must be left to judge.

Another strange thing—perhaps in keeping with all the rest—must be mentioned. In the general list of the members of the body, as given in the "Memorial," the name of that one member who only had "a perfect knowledge

of all things from the very first," and whose understanding in the indorsement of the "Historical Address" may not be challenged—in that list, *the name of that one member is not found*. Of this strange fact no explanation will be offered—none is needed from us. If silence respecting all the other errors named had been deemed equally justifiable, the necessity for these strictures would have been superseded.



## MINISTERIAL CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH.

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SHARON—as it was, embracing the territory which now constitutes the two towns of Sharon and Seward—has been a fruitful garden of the Lord. Within a little more than half a century it has furnished twenty-one men for the Lutheran ministry alone. So far as our information extends, the following names furnish a complete

### LIST.

- Adam Crownse,<sup>1</sup>
  - Nicholas Van Alstine,
  - Levi Sternberg,
  - William Ottman,<sup>1</sup>
  - David Ottman,<sup>1</sup>
  - Marcus W. Empie,
  - Marcus Kling,
  - John Rosenberg,<sup>1</sup>
  - Daniel Van Alstine,
  - Statt,<sup>1</sup>
  - Perry,<sup>1</sup>
- 

<sup>1</sup> Departed.

W. H. Shelland,  
J. A. Rosenberg,  
O. D. S. Marcley,  
John Kling,  
J. H. Weber,  
J. W. Young,  
S. W. Young,  
H. Strail,  
Sefferenas Ottman,  
George Young.

Besides the above, the immediate fruit of the field, several others should be mentioned, who went out from churches planted and fostered by the church in this place :

A. Wieting,  
G. W. Porter,  
L. E. Densmore,  
B. Fake,  
W. G. Thrall.

Two young men of decided promise died during their course of studies, with the ministry in view :

David Rosenberg,  
Shoemaker.

One or two entered upon their studies for

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<sup>1</sup>Departed.

the sacred profession, and turned aside to other callings.

Of this number some were never in connection with the Franckean Synod; some were, but are not now, having other ecclesiastical relations; two are no longer properly in the ministry. But the purpose of the present publication will be subserved by these general statements. Only those who have departed this life will be indicated by reference.



## THE SISTERHOOD OF CHURCHES.

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ENTIRE correctness is not claimed for the following exhibit, either as to order or date. Perfection out of confusion is not a human practicability. It is given as the best that can be, and it is believed to be a close approximation to historical truthfulness.

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF  
SHARON, NEW YORK,

Was organized 1775, by Rev. P. N. Somers.

*Pastors.*

Rev. P. N. Somers,  
" H. Meoler,  
" A. Crownse,  
" P. Wieting.

During the ministry of Rev. Wieting, in the year 1837, the division, consequent upon the organization of the Franckean Synod, occurred. The part of the church which adhered to the Hartwick Synod, retained the original title, and

exists under that title now. As it is proposed to trace the growth and multiplication of the part which remained under the pastoral care of Mr. Wieting only, it will suffice to say, that the present pastor of St. John's is Rev. M. J. Stover.

The field which now constituted Mr. Wieting's charge was soon divided into two churches.

GARDNERSVILLE, ORGANIZED 1845.

*Pastors.*

- Rev. P. Wieting,
- “ P. H. Turner,
- “ C. Diefendorf,
- “ A. N. Daniels,
- “ H. L. Dox.

LAWYERSVILLE, ORGANIZED 1845.

*Pastors.*

- Rev. P. Wieting,
- “ M. Kling.

SHARON, WISCONSIN, ORGANIZED 1845

*Pastors.*

- Rev. David Ottman,
- “ M. W. Empie,
- “ R. Smith,
- “ Coons,

Rev. Shaeffer,  
" H. L. Dox,  
" L. Ford,  
" D. H. Snowden.

ARGUSVILLE, ORGANIZED 1839.

*Pastors.*

Rev. P. Wieting,  
" J. D. Lawyer,  
" M. Kling,  
" J. R. Sikes,  
" W. A. Julian,  
" Marsh,  
" A. L. Bridgman.  
" L. Ford.

LEESVILLE, ORGANIZED 1840.

*Pastors.*

Rev. P. Wieting,  
" G. Young,  
" N. Borst,  
" J. A. Rosenberg,  
" W. H. Shelland,  
" G. W. Hemperly,  
" J. H. Weber,  
" C. Diefendorf,  
" S. W. Young,  
" S. Bruce.

## CENTER VALLEY, ORGANIZED 1841.

*Pastors.*

Rev. D. Ottman,  
" J. D. Lawyer,  
" M. Kling,  
" N. Borst,  
" J. A. Rosenberg,  
" J. Kling,  
" J. H. Weber,  
" C. Diefendorf,  
" S. Bruce.

## LITTLE YORK, ORGANIZED 1848.

*Pastors.*

Rev. M. Kling,  
" J. R. Sikes,  
" M. Kling.

At the meeting of the Re-union the above seven churches were all of which reckoning was made, as having been planted and nurtured by the pastoral labors and care of Rev. P. Wieting. But as the result of a free interchange of views at one of the meetings, it was ascertained that the churches of Freysbush and Starkville were both brought into existence and in their infancy sustained by his min-

istrations. So that there are ten churches now where there was but one when he commenced his ministerial labors here. All these churches have good houses of worship; some have parsonages, all are self-sustaining, and together furnish an aggregate of nearly twelve hundred members. Counting those who have gone to other churches, and those who have gone to the church triumphant, it does not seem improbable that the grand total of the membership does not vary much from fifteen hundred.

The Re-union contemplated a review of this field as thus unfolded. The result of that gathering will, in part, be found in the following pages. The great Re-union, in joyful anticipation, will disclose the rest.

Between three and four hundred years of ministerial labor, at a very moderate estimate, have been devoted to different portions of the great vineyard by those who were called to the work in this field. Thousands have heard the word from their lips, and the harvest will determine how many have believed and will be saved.

## THE RE-UNION.

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### OPENING EXERCISES.

At the appointed hour a goodly number of the expected guests from abroad and a respectable congregation from the place assembled. The church was moderately decorated, and suitable mottoes were seen here and there. In every aspect it was a meeting of pleasure, and all hearts were hopeful of a delightful occasion.

As the senior member of the fraternity, REV. N. VAN ALSTINE conducted the devotional exercises. The scripture read was appropriate; the hymn sung was impressive; the prayer was tender, comprehensive, and inspiring. After a second singing, the pastor gave utterance to WORDS OF WELCOME, the topic being

### LOCAL INFLUENCES.

Our present Re-union rests upon LOCAL INFLUENCES. I say *our Re-union*, because providentially, and by many strong and tender rela-

tions, extending over nearly the entire period to be brought under review, I feel myself closely identified with you. And yet, for reasons which will soon become apparent, it is befitting that at this point I should say, *your Re-union*. You feel, as I do not—as I cannot—the power of local influence in this gathering, but for which it would have no significance. Let the form of the statement then be changed. *Your present Re-union rests upon local influences.* As Christians, you were reared and nurtured under the guardianship of the same denomination and brought into the fellowship of the same Church. As ministers, you were for the most part educated at the same institution, and received your credentials from the same ecclesiastical body. And all these sources of fraternal affinities are traceable to the simple fact that you were born and brought up in the same section of country. You became Lutherans because Lutheranism was here a prevailing embodiment of Christianity, and commended itself to your understandings and tastes as more attractive, more satisfactory, more desirable, than any other embodiment. You became members of this Church, because

in this community there was no other church which equally commanded your respect and confidence. Your attention and your convictions of duty were directed to the sacred profession, for the reason that here such facts were unfolded and such instructions were imparted as placed this high vocation prominently before you, drew out your desires respecting it, and satisfied you that God called you to it. For your education you bent your steps to the venerable old nursery of the denomination, because all the religious influences by which all your views and habits had been moulded, turned your preferences towards it. And when you thought yourselves in some measure prepared to commence the great work of preaching Christ, and yielded your assent to the prevalent customs of the religious world, asking ecclesiastical endorsement of that commission which you claimed to have received from God, because within the area of country where all your religious endowments and tendencies had been developed and directed, there was no other body with which you were so fully satisfied as challenging your attachments and affording scope to your aspirations, you sought for

licensure and ordination from the Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

And now, permit me to request you for a moment, from the positions in life which you respectively occupy at the present time, to retrace your footsteps backward along the several and more or less diverged lines of your personal and professional histories. Note carefully, as you proceed in your retrospections, how, as the concentric circles of your activities become contracted, the controlling power of influence is increased, how increasingly prominent and potential the agencies become by which your plans and purposes were regulated as those agencies lessen in number; how individuality almost sinks out of sight, and relative supervision approximates supremacy; how much more nearly you approach each other as you near the polar points of your nativity, and how inevitably, presently, your condition and character become identified with your common birth place. Your early habits, your first religious impressions, your conversions, your vocations, your educational pursuits, your ecclesiastical preferences, might have been—must have been—very different had life began

with you elsewhere. But for the fact that it may be said of you, brethren, these men were born here, the world would never have known you as it knows you now. You are what you are because you began to live, move and have your being, in good old Sharon, Schoharie county, New York.

Nor let it be thought that this is attaching too much importance to local influences. Influences are not less truthful and elevating because they are local. That physical causes have much to do with mental endowments and moral character, may not be questioned. And so, too, it is clear beyond dispute that some localities are more favorable to virtuous developments than others are. Does any one ask upon what the discriminating power of local influences depends? A frank confession of ignorance is the best reply to this inquiry. And if the curious are not satisfied with this answer, we will respectfully request them to tell us what, without any qualification, that subtle something is which we call influence. The simple truth, and the whole truth, respecting this mysterious subject, is that we are cognizant of facts the reasons for which transcend

our comprehension. Why Lutheranism was introduced into this section of country at so early a date, and just when it was, is a question which, when pressed back beyond a given point, becomes unanswerable. But we accept the fact as we find it. Here, as elsewhere, prehistoric speculations have little practical value. The faith of the Reformation was planted in this productive soil before the now living Church and ministry had any existence. That it has been perpetuated and propagated, if there were no other proof, as there surely is, would be sufficiently demonstrated by the present Re-union.

And now, having hastily alluded to those inscrutable agencies by which the past so impressively represents itself in the present, let us, from the standpoint we occupy, fix our attention a little more definitely upon some of the results which lie within the range of legitimate contemplation.

We are here to recognize and to rejoice in the facts and the fruits of the Christian religion, as they have been embodied and exemplified in this portion of the State of New York during the last half century; to express our

confidence in and our unfaltering attachment to that system of faith and practice which had its distinctive origin in the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth century, and which continues to bear the name of the illustrious man to whom, under God, more than to any other man since the apostolic era, the Christian world is indebted for freedom of thought, for the rights of conscience, and for the unrestricted use of the Word of God as the only authoritative source of religious instruction; to testify our appreciation of the worth and worthiness, the firmness and fidelity, of our Christian ancestry in establishing and perpetuating the Church of the Reformation, with all its essential concomitants, in the county of our birth and in the homes of our childhood. We are here to renew our covenant vows with and to the people of God at whose altars we first made a good profession before many witnesses—the people from whom and with whose blessings we went forth as ministers of the New Testament, to proclaim to a sinful race the unsearchable riches of Christ; and we are here to reaffirm unswerving devotion to this church of our early choice, to each other as ministers sent

out by it, and to that economy of grace, the only hope of a fallen world, of which it is the glory of the church to be in some humble sense an exponent.

Leaving it for our brethren who are to be heard in reply to speak of *Ties Unbroken* and of *Gracious Providences*, it only remains for me to welcome you, beloved brethren, as children of this church, back to the fold to which you were first admitted. And in attempting to discharge this most pleasant duty, I must confess that a shade of melancholy hangs over my mind which is not dispelled by all the delightful associations of the occasion. I am, indeed, painfully impressed that this most befitting Reunion should have occurred at a much earlier date; that these words of welcome should have been uttered by lips long since sealed with silence—by him out of whose ministrations and in answer to whose prayers you were put in positions to represent, as you do to-day, the religious progress of this vicinity during the last half century; and that with you might have been gathered other dear brethren some of whom preceded and others followed after the long-loved and faithful shepherd to their

rest and their reward. Reflecting upon the number of representatives of this church who, at any time during the later years of the revered Wieting's life, would have gladly responded to his fatherly call, and shared with him the pleasures and profits of such a family gathering, one can hardly be reconciled to the fact that so befitting an occasion should have been omitted. But while we may regret the omission, we must honor the habits of life and the views of duty which led to it. Everything desirable cannot be crowded into the ministry of one man, however earnest, however prolonged it may be. And while he did so much, and did it so well, which, in the judgment of all, should not have been neglected, we may with modified reluctance acquiesce in the deference of privileges which might appropriately have received attention at least a score of years before. We will not, accordingly, indulge in vain regrets. The records of the past are crowded with omissions and mistakes. We review them with sadness, but we can neither undo them nor correct them. We all owe much to our esteemed brother, whose ceaseless toils extended over forty years in this same field,

though they closed without affording such an occasion as we enjoy to day. He has gone, and others have gone. He is not here to give you his paternal greetings, and to extend to you the hospitalities of the church of which he had the oversight so long. The cheer, the ~~smiles~~, the words of wisdom of other dear breshren, too, we miss. Such have been, such are the Divine overrulings.

But, though ministers and members die, the ministry and the Church survive. There is, thank God, a *succession*, both ministerial and ecclesiastical, more Divine in its origin, more certain in its perpetuity, and more glorious in its functions than the assumed apostolical order upon which the groundless claim is rested that it is the only foundation of the true Church. Upon this *succession* this Church continues to exist, notwithstanding the changes which have taken place in the membership, and in the pastoral relation. And, dear brethren in the ministry, and brethren and sisters of other churches who are here to recognize your filial relations to the paternal fold, you have evidence which satisfies you that those relations are still cherished, though most of you have

long been separated from the immediate fellowship of this Church.

And, beloved, in her undying attachment to her children, your Mother has extended to you a cordial invitation to visit your early home; and you have greatly honored us and gladdened our hearts by accepting that invitation. And, as you appear in our midst, we meet you with a thousand welcomes. We welcome you to the places of your birth, the scenes of your childhood, the play-grounds of your youth. Here are the hills and the valleys, the fields and some of the forests, from which you received your earliest impressions respecting nature and nature's God. Though they, like yourselves, have been greatly changed by the legitimate developments of time and the inevitable transformations of an advancing civilization, yet they, too, like yourselves, have retained their essential identity. Here are the same murmuring streams on whose crystal waters you were wont to gaze with childhood's wondering eyes; the same winding highways so frequently traversed on the endlessly diversified errands of youth and early manhood. Here are at least a few of

the well-remembered dwellings, standing just where they used to stand, showing a little more distinctly, it may be, the marks of age; while others, though they have been assailed by the irreverent spirit of what we call progressive improvement, yet subjecting them to the ordeal of scrutiny you will plainly see that antiquity has been imperfectly concealed by modern fashions. The old, familiar family names are still here—names which, notwithstanding all the enlargements of your associations, you never have forgotten, never can forget. Here are the graves of many of your youthful associates; the graves of many of the companions of your riper years; the graves of nearly all of the fathers and the mothers to whom you were accustomed to look for counsel, and by whom you first saw exemplified the spirit and power of that religion upon the truthfulness and efficiency of which all our hopes for the future depend. We welcome you to these more than classic grounds—to these hallowed associations and memories of other days. We welcome you to this consecrated house of worship in which this church, *your church*, the church of your

early choice, are accustomed to meet and sit as in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. It is not the same edifice in which you used to hear the Word of God, and in which you took the sacred vows of membership. But it represents the same glorious system of faith and worship to which you then committed yourselves.

We welcome you to this altar, at which the company of believers here from time to time recognize and renew their allegiance to the Crucified, by the solemn observance of the holy Eucharist; to this pulpit, which, so long as it faithfully and fearlessly proclaims the whole counsel of God, you will accept as a symbol of that method of religious instruction by which the Gospel is to be made known unto all the world and unto every creature. We welcome you to our dwellings, our family altars, our parlors, our tables, to participate with us in all the blessings, all the luxuries, all the sources of enjoyment, with which our bountiful Father above has favored us. Dear brethren, we welcome you HOME. Our home is yours. We receive you, not as prodigals driven back to us by destitution, but as faithful, honored sons, from earnest toil in the Master's

vineyard, to relax your hard-pressed energies, and rest a little, that you may go to your work again with renewed vigor. Claim your rights. Use your privileges. Feel no restraints but such as you see fit to impose upon yourselves. We confide in you, and we have no fears that you will abuse our confidence. Make this family gathering memorable; an occasion of blessedness in the largest sense; a means of lasting good, a preparation for and a foretaste of that great Re-union, about the certainty of which we entertain no doubt. This may be the last till then. When that occurs, if not before, we shall hope to meet you all again, together with those who are not with us now, but whose names and virtues are and ever will be embalmed in grateful memories.

### UNBROKEN TIES.

REV. M. W. EMPIE.

*Dear Pastor and Friends:* It affords me much gratification and pleasure to hear these cordial words of welcome to the home of my childhood and of *our* fathers—especially the manner of them and their charming effects, reviving as they do the most precious mem-

ories of the "long ago"—memories which cluster around the departed and the living. I am particularly happy, under these circumstances, to renew former acquaintances and past associations, and to *find again* the tender ties of social and Christian union, and the sympathies which may have been measurably *hidden* by time, although never forgotten.

Here many of us were born. Here I first saw the light of this world. Here our fathers and kindred according to the flesh have lived—here they died—here their ashes repose. Here their survivors, a later generation, live and act, and here they will fall; aye, they are passing away one by one, and here their dust will mingle with those "*gone before*," until the resurrection. I feel in a manner *strange* among you, and somewhat *sad*, as I appear in your midst to-day. And why? Because more than forty years have passed away since I moved and acted among you; and that generation has passed away, at least those older than myself, while those younger have passed out of my recognition. If I chance to meet any of my boyhood associates, they are as strange to me as any others whom I have

never seen before. I do not know my own kindred, except the older ones, and their number is very small.

But the *ties* that bind me to Sharon and to the "loved ones" that I knew in the past, and their descendants, *are not broken*—never can be. The mention of any familiar name, or incident, strikes at once a chord of sympathy in my soul, and causes deep and harmonious music within, satisfying, mysteriously, the hunger and thirst that kindred spirits feel:

Here I was baptized by Rev. A. Crownse. Here I made a public profession of religion, and entered into church relation and fellowship; and here my name is still recorded, and will continue to be—a relation and union that time or distance cannot sever. *First Christian* communions and church fellowships are dear to and ever present to my memory. I remember well the old church on the hill, and the time and circumstances when I took upon me the vows of discipleship. Forty of us received at the same time the hand of welcome and fellowship through our wortly pastor, Rev. P. Wieting. Some of those remain to this day; some have fallen asleep in Jesus; some, I fear,

have made shipwreck of their faith and confidence. For those last we sadly grieve; but the faithful, living and dead, we fondly cherish in our thoughts and hearts; and

"Bless the tie that binds our souls in Christian love,  
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that  
above."

Christian *ties* are perpetual. Nothing can dissolve our union with Christ and his people—\* \* \* "neither *death* nor *life*, \* \* \* nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." So then those who have lived and died in the Church, and those who are now alive in the body of Christ, are one and inseparable.

"The saints on earth and those above but one communion make,  
One family we dwell in Him, one church above—be-  
neath,  
Though now divided by the stream—the narrow stream  
of death."

A source of comfort to us in our conflict here is that the saints in heaven sympathize with us who remain. A great cloud of wit-

nesses, they cheer us in our race, and possibly minister to our success. Another is, we shall soon finish our work and join them in the city of God. "*We shall know each other there,*" and forever enjoy uninterrupted communion with all the blood-washed and sanctified. Another is, that while we leave cherished associates here in the church, co-workers and co-worshippers, behind, we shall gain a more numerous band of saints and acquaintances "*over there*"—to say nothing of the millions of all ages and nations, with whom we have had no acquaintance here, but whom we shall soon learn to know and love. We who have lived an average generation and more, having known a larger number of those "*passed over*" than we know of remaining ones, shall not enter the "home of the saints" as strangers, but shall find ourselves among a host of familiar friends. We joyfully anticipate meeting at the very gate of heaven multitudes of our former kindred and friends, viz: our fathers, mothers, children, neighbors, pastors, teachers, and fellow pilgrims who before us died in the Lord.

The ties that thus bind earth and heaven

together are not involuntary or arbitrary, but of heavenly birth and holy sympathy—spiritual and eternal.

"So star by star declines, till all have passed away;  
So morning high and higher shines, to pure and perfect day.

Nor sink those stars in empty light,  
But hide themselves in heaven's own night."

### GRACIOUS PROVIDENCES.

REV. J. A. ROSENBERG.

Providence is that manifestation of the care and supervision which God exercises over His creatures. It includes the direction of all the affairs of the world. It recognizes God as the source of all things, as holding the reins of universal government, and regulating all things to the promotion of His glory and the interest of His creation.

This doctrine has been uniformly held by the Church. It has been well-nigh universally acknowledged by the world. Much of the development attending the world's history has grown out of this acknowledgment. Practically the Deity may be eliminated from the affairs of men; but theoretically there is little disposition to either question or ignore Him.

*Whence is this doctrine?*

It rests upon the consciousness of the world.

Whether we account for this consciousness or not, there can be no doubt respecting the fact. A controlling power is recognized—is felt—is acknowledged. It becomes the final rest of hope to the world.

The various expressions of religious sentiment, through all stages of human development, whether these expressions are right or wrong, sufficiently attest the position here assumed. It is hardly supposable that a principle that finds universal recognition can be altogether without foundation in fact.

*A universal providence is found in the very nature of things.*

He that could create the world, with its teeming millions, its vast variety of being—with the utter dependence involved—*would* not leave it to the contingencies of chance. What is of sufficient importance to call forth creative energy, must command proper care and attention.

*God cannot be eliminated from the world.* He fills the universe. He is the source of life. By Him all things exist. *But this doctrine is most clearly and emphatically taught in the*

*Scriptures.* Our progenitors in Eden "walked and talked with God," in the days of their purity. They were compelled to answer to His voice after their sin and fall, and to obey the authority that drove them from the garden. The cry of Abel's blood was not unheeded, nor was Cain able to hide his crime. Noah built his ark of safety by Divine direction, while the old world perished by the visitation of Divine power. Men planned by means of a tower to climb above any subsequent flood, but the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of the people was the result.

God would have a chosen people, and Israel came into being. Egypt could hold this people so long as they needed a nursery, and so long as their condition there was needed as a means of discipline; but then Egypt could hold them no longer. The inhabitants of Canaan must yield their homes and their lives, because God gave the land to His own chosen people. And we will find the Divine hand equally apparent and effective in the whole history of the world.

Thrones are established and nations are reared. When these have met, or have failed

to meet, the object of the Divine purposes, they have fallen to ruin, and others have been established. Thus God has declared himself in the affairs of the world. "He that runneth may read."

The same is true of communities, of families and of individuals. In the circumscribed and minute affairs of men, the providences of God are as signally displayed as on the larger field of nations and of the world. Noah and his family were saved because of the Divine direction. Moses was the child of a special and gracious providence. The symbol of the Divine presence was with him in such a manner that all the people were made to understand that he was a child of providence. Even the proud and unwilling monarch of Egypt was forced to its acknowledgment. Saul, in his rebellion against God, was constrained to say, "Who art thou, Lord;" and quickly came the answer, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

The language of Jesus was, "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father." God cares for them. The gracious aspect appears in the fact that the same authority declares that care and interest increase as value in-

creases. Much more will He clothe and feed His people. "He numbers the very hairs of their heads."

While these proofs might be indefinitely extended, we may well assume that nothing more is needed. What follows then?

*God's hand is to be recognized in bringing about those conditions out of which churches are developed.*

The Church is preeminently the creation of God. It requires little knowledge of human nature to see the impossibility of church existence, without a superior and gracious moulding power. Men are called and qualified to the work of the ministry, but only as they are called of God. People are called from darkness to light. Moral conditions and desires are changed. Demand for the church is created. Organizations are effected. The combined forces of ministers and people are brought to the cultivation of the Master's vineyard. By their work under the divine blessing "the wilderness is made to bloom as the rose." Thus God's hand is ever seen and ever shaping the conditions out of which human good is secured.

*All is of grace.*

The benefits growing out of these providential interpositions may be measurably recounted, but never fully comprehended.

What an honor to be chosen of God as the recipient of His grace, care, mercy, and then the medium of His glorious designs to the world ! Yet all this is implied in the existence of the Church. The blessings which flow from this condition can never be estimated. The life and efficiency of the Church is *one of the results.*

Without God's favor we are dead to all that can make for our good ; with it we are qualified to receive, to enjoy, and to utilize our being with the high aims of the gospel.

While these positions will be accepted as in the main correct, have they an application to the history of this locality ? Is it the result of chance that the gathering of to-day has become possible ?

A pastor and people are brought together ; they enter upon their sacred work. The years come and go ; numbers are added to the church, and organizations are multiplied. Among these, numbers hear the Divine call to the work of the ministry ; they go from the mother church

to other fields of usefulness, and their work is crowned with no small degree of success. Some have been called from their labors just as they were entering the field, others after years of successful toil. Others of the number are spared to the work of the Church. We are permitted to respond to the call of this Re-union, upon ground memorable from the associations of childhood, and rendered sacred as the birth-place of spiritual life and early religious association.

Do we recognize a gracious Providence here; if so, what good end can it subserve?

There is a gratification in the social aspect that is afforded by the occasion. We meet again, after years of separation and toil; we take counsel together. We look on the scenes of youth, recall the conditions that served to blend our lives with the interest of the Church of our fathers; wherein we find not only our work, but our highest enjoyment. These things are a source of no small gratification. He who said: "Rejoice evermore," can bring about those conditions in which rejoicing is possible.

*There may be a gracious providence in this reminder of those that are absent. How con-*

spicuous in his absence the respected and lamented Pastor who, during a period of forty years, ministered in holy things in this community. To most of us he was a spiritual father. We not only cherish his memory and emulate his virtues and efficiency, but are reminded of the lapse of time. The end is by and by. But younger men are absent. Some of them were our seniors in years and in the ministry. Some were juniors in both, yet their work is ended. We shall see their faces no more.

We look into the pews. They are filled as in years gone by. In this fact there is an element of joyous gratification. The years roll on. Changes occur, but God and his church remain. Yet we ask, Where are those so familiar in the days of our youth? Here and there we see a well-known form, yet how changed! The countenance is furrowed by the plowshare of time; the once raven locks are adorned by the frosts of winter. The eye may remain undimmed, the vigor of a youthful manhood survive, capacities that are not second to those of other years exist, but we cannot overlook the fact that time is passing—

"The night cometh." Said one who was among the first to go from this church as a minister of the Gospel, and who labored zealously and often with great success: "Could I live my life over, I would be much more zealous than I have been."

We may need just this gathering at this juncture of time, with the lessons involved, to prompt us to proper activity. "Walk in the light while ye have the light."

By this gathering the church is reminded of a portion of her history, her origin, her trials, labors and triumphs, her ingathering and extended influence for good, reaching to other portions of the church, resulting in God's glory and the salvation of many. Has she not existed by the gracious providence of God? It seems to us, her distinctive character and mission have been the results of a Divine and gracious guidance.

The time was when her position was *distinctive*. Hers was a new departure—a moral revolutionary condition. In this condition she was not only an object of wonder, but, to put it mildly, of *opposition* and *persecution*. But let us not dwell on this aspect of her history,

though it might afford matter for volumes. God was in her history. Faith and devotion to principle have secured success, as they ever will secure it.

The Church still lives. She will continue as long as Christ is made her Head, and His glory the guiding-star of her pilgrimage. The fathers are not. They who stood in the battle front, with few exceptions, have passed away. Others have succeeded to their places and their work. So we move. The work continues, but the workmen fall.

In recounting these facts, we may hear the Divine admonition, "Be ye also ready." A little longer, and we of to-day will give place to others.

Some of us have gone forth from these altars seeking broader fields of usefulness. We were brought into her folds by the truth fostered by the mother Church. At her altars our young lives were consecrated to the service of God. Some have labored long and faithfully. They have borne the "burden and heat of the day." The sun is far down in the western horizon. Soon it will be night, and there will be rest.

Others there are of less years, who, in the

vigor of their manhood, are effectively wielding the sword of the Spirit. Others still are coming for the labor of the harvest fields.

The number of those who have gone from this church, as ministers of the word, has been a matter of wonder. And the power that has been developed has not been overlooked. The spirit here imbibed has been carried elsewhere. We believed, and therefore have we spoken. God has owned and honored, and now permits us the pleasure of this re-union. But pleasure is not all. There is a broader design. We shall do well to fathom those designs and make haste in their accomplishment.

If some have departed, we thank God that others remain. Respecting some we can say, they have been familiar from childhood. Their counsels have been earnestly sought and carefully heeded; and their counsels are still desired and respected. Their preaching has not only interested, but often thrilled the writer. As a result, high aspiration has been enkindled. To say so much will be allowed, though in the presence of those to whom reference is made. We thank God that they live and are still doing valiant service for the Master. We greet them

as fathers of the Church. We rejoice in that gracious Providence that has perpetuated their lives and their usefulness.

But others have fallen. Some almost in youth, just as they became well equipped for the battle. Some suddenly, in the prime of manhood, when they seemed to us a necessity. Others have fallen in riper years, well nigh "like a shock of corn fully ripe." But here, as elsewhere, we recognize a gracious hand. Theirs is the eternal gain.

Time will not permit us to dwell on those providences that are of a personal character. A little reflection will recall their multiplied numbers, as well as their gracious character.

From God we can have nothing but gracious providences. These are easily seen in those things we account mercies. They are not less gracious in the clouds—the storm. These may be equally expressive of the Divine goodness. To God be all glory—to us *faith, hope, patience, final perseverance.*

#### STATEMENTS.

After the usual devotional exercises during the Saturday evening session, an excellent pre-

paratory sermon was preached by Rev. W. H. Shelland. Text, Heb. xii. 22-24; topic, CHRISTIANS COMPANY.

The balance of the time was occupied with the poem and reminiscences.

## POEM.

BY REV. A. L. BRIDGMAN.

Now may my numbers, soft and clear,  
Fall gently on each opening ear;  
May light Divine descend and shine  
On this poetic soul of mine.  
The wintry storms are now all past,  
The angel Spring has come at last;  
The Artist's pencil, though unseen,  
Begins to paint the fields in green.  
Earth's landscapes now with beauty shine,  
And Nature looks almost Divine.  
Since God is dressing up the spring,  
And birds in every forest sing;  
Since Nature smiles, and groves are fair,  
And Sol's mild lustre warms the air,  
Shall those not have a pleasant time  
Who listen to my *strains sublime*?  
May their communion here be sweet,  
And kindred souls each other greet.  
May it be such as angels feel,  
And duly stamped with Heaven's own seal!  
There is a union here of hearts;

And you have come from different parts  
Your various histories to relate—  
To give your past and present state.  
Your minds are in a proper mood  
To give us only what is good.  
We shall expect the finest wheat  
Made into bread for us to eat!  
And that there be no signs of destitution,  
A spacious field is under contribution.  
The mouths of our souls will be open wide  
To receive the nourishment you may provide!  
O give us not a meagre meal,  
Since our stomachs are large, and will hold a good  
deal!  
And the poet will bid all those God speed  
Who will satisfy our mental need!  
Some will give fish and others fowl,  
And I trust no one will have cause to growl.  
Some will supply nectar, and others wine—  
*The unfermented juice of the vine!*  
The essays that will here be read  
Will furnish food for heart and head;  
The preachers will show their radiant faces,  
And their hearts will glow with all the graces.  
They will lead us into pastures green,  
And they will not leave our spirits lean;  
And if tears run not down our cheeks in a flood,  
The preacher's appeals may stir our blood.  
And may their words so eloquently flow  
That all may feel a heavenly joy below!  
Some will go back to their former days,  
And tell us of their youthful ways.

They will paint for us the shining rills  
That wound like silver ribbons from the hills ;  
Tell us of the forest's grateful shade ;  
How merry sunbeams on the waters played ;  
With rapture allude to the golden hours  
They spent among the brooks and flowers.  
Many things they will joyfully tell  
On which their memory delights to dwell.  
They will speak of scenes of joy and mirth,  
When they could hardly keep their hold on earth !  
Tell how their faculties unfolded,  
And by what means their characters were moulded.  
Tell how the hill of science they ascended ;  
On what conditions their success depended.  
Of Hartwick's classic halls they'll speak,  
Where they learned the Latin and the Greek.  
They'll speak of an inward, mysterious power,  
Which often lasted to the midnight hour.  
They will show us how the truly wise  
Will give their faculties good exercise.  
Can we win harvests from the soil  
Unless there be exhausting toil ?  
Perhaps *some one* of them may slyly tell  
(And *all* could do the thing right well)  
How Cupid sent a dart  
Not into the head, but *heart*.  
For this we know is a tender part !  
Ran not the tide of rapture high ?  
Can any miss the reason why ?  
And when that bright angel drew nigh,  
And all the time that she was by,  
No common glory kindled in the eye !

To give our verse variety and grace,  
Some graver thoughts will now demand a place.  
Some will refer to the happy hours  
When first heaven's path they trod,  
And gave with an undying trust  
Their being up to God :  
When no more they put the question,  
Who will show us any good?  
For the joys of God's salvation  
Overwhelmed them like a flood.  
All parts of God's creation  
Then wore a different face,  
For then their inward being  
Was touched with heavenly grace.  
The beaming of the countenance,  
The flashing of the eye,  
Told plainly to all Christians  
That heaven was very nigh !  
That holy book, the Bible,  
Was then no longer sealed,  
For its beauty and attractions  
Stood gloriously revealed.  
Martial and sentimental songs  
Were then no longer heard,  
For the song of Christ's redemption  
Was the one their bosoms stirred.  
They called on all who dwell below,  
And all who dwell above,  
To sing the joys and wonders  
Of Christ's redeeming love.

Some will tell us of their call  
God's holy word to preach,  
And something of the spirit  
In which they sought to teach;  
O, what were fame and gold to them,  
When the impulse stirred within,  
And they longed to see the sinner saved  
From the guilt and power of sin?  
We will hear from some of the *progress* made,  
Since *deep foundations* were at Hartwick laid.  
They'll tell us something of the rounds they've run,  
And sketch a little of the work they've done;  
For this we think no person will dispute,  
That in due time good trees will bear good fruit.  
Some will describe the state of things some fifty  
years ago,  
When the tide of vital piety was running rather low.  
For all preachers then were not in haste  
To reclaim and till the dreary waste;  
But the Father sent his servants forth,  
And soon with sweet surprise  
They saw the precious seed spring up,  
And lovely verdure rise.  
The altars then were thronged  
With the old and with the young,  
And the song of God's salvation  
With holy joy was sung.  
And multitudes of precious souls  
From time to time were born;  
And many of that number now  
The heavenly courts adorn!

Some will talk about the field in 1881,  
And the part which is assigned them will doubt-  
less be well done;  
For they will have a conscience  
That things be rightly told;  
They will not make the age all iron,  
Nor altogether gold.  
Some will dwell upon the future—  
A many-sided theme—  
And the way it will be treated  
Will prove no idle dream!  
'Tis not at all presumptuous  
To approach this theme anew;  
And our faith in those who treat it  
Will be generous and true.  
Their thoughts will be intelligent,  
And robed in neat attire;  
Their minds will move with freedom,  
And their hearts will glow with fire.  
These men are on the mountain-top,  
Surrounded by the light;  
May they pity those who are below,  
Who dwell in shades of night!  
Do they see the future, fraught  
With all good and lovely things?  
That we may soar to those bright heights  
May they lend their radiant wings!  
When that glorious time comes  
We will sound the loud trumpets  
And beat the big drums!  
The landscape shall smile  
In liveliest sheen,

And the fields shall be clothed  
In a far brighter green.  
*Then poets and birds will more sweetly sing,*  
And continue longer on the wing.  
*Then the preacher will not stretch*  
Beyond his measure;  
And the people will not stare  
*At his stolen treasure.*  
*Then he will not flaunt*  
In borrowed plumes !  
*Then he will cease to glory*  
In tobacco fumes !  
Some will speak of the departed,  
Whose forms we'll see no more  
Until we are admitted  
To that bright and peaceful shore.  
The mists of earth to them are rolled away,  
And now their spirits revel  
In everlasting day.  
They blend their notes  
In that grand celestial chorus  
Of the mighty army  
Who have gone before us!  
They dwell in a land where no discord jars ;  
Where their heads are crowned with immortal  
stars.  
If with faith and courage  
We tread the path they trod ;  
On Heaven's golden hills with them  
We'll enjoy the smiles of God.  
Some are present here to-day  
Whose toils are nearly o'er ;

Who can almost hear the waters beat  
Upon the golden shore!  
They soon will tread the flowery plains  
That never knew the night;  
And Heaven will break upon them  
In a flood of golden light.

## SABBATH SERVICES.

Six out of the seven churches were occupied by the members of the Fraternity during the morning hour. All were present at the 3 o'clock p. m. service, and listened to the essay for the hour, and to some miscellaneous remarks by different members.

In the evening the house was crowded. Rev. N. Van Alstine delivered the communion discourse—a plain, practical sermon—text, Rom. vi. 23; topic, "God's Great Gift to Man." The communion was very large and deeply impressive.

## THE FIELD IN 1831.

REV. M. W. EMPIE.

A. D. 1831, a half century ago!—well, I was here then, a lad of seven years. Why I should have been chosen to present to this meeting the history and scenes of that remote

but interesting period, I cannot divine. I have a very faint recollection of that time and its events, and shall have to draw largely upon tradition for what I may say.

Sharon is my native town (Sharon and Seward were then one). Here I received all my early training, social and religious, which in some respects was ample and satisfactory, although in others unfortunate. I was well trained at home, brought up to industry and virtue, and a regular attendant at church. But in those days we had no Sabbath-schools, no books or periodicals specially adapted to children, except the catechism and a few story primers.

This Lutheran field embraced the two churches of Sharon and New Rhinebeck, in each of which services were held on alternate Sabbaths, while on afternoons and evenings services were held in many school-houses and private dwellings. Many preaching services (and well attended) were also held on week days. The Sharon church was located on the hill one-half mile north of here. The one at New Rhinebeck was built in 1798, and is still standing, a relic of the past.

Out of these churches or congregations grew the following, viz: Sharon, Gardnersville, Lawyersville, Pleasant Valley, Leesville, Argusville, Little York, and Sharon, Wis., in all eight, aggregating over 1,000 members, with present materials for more than twice as many more.

But to return, the religious opportunities of fifty years ago were in keeping with the general intelligence, and the natural advantages and improvements of the period. Those were developed in limited degree. I may here remark, that nearly all the improvements and inventions which so signally favor our generation, have been introduced within the last half century, *i. e.*, labor-saving machinery, rapid transit, instant communication, etc. I may name implements of husbandry, inventions to facilitate domestic labors, methods of travel and of transmitting knowledge, the art of producing sun-pictures; and we might add a thousand triumphs of art and science, relating to war, commerce, business, education, pleasure, etc., which now are in general use, and are familiar to every school boy, of which the fathers of even less than fifty years ago were entirely ignorant.

The religious advantages of those days were few and simple. The children were baptized, and brought to church (a commendable practice, which, I am sorry to say, has fallen into disuse), and most of them were instructed out of the catechism and Testament, and taught to say prayers. I will, however, not assume to speak of the general practice among the church members of that period. I will speak for myself and for my home. From my first recollection, prayer was wont to be made in my father's house. Family worship was maintained morning and evening. It consisted of prayers at evening, Scripture reading, singing and prayer in the morning, and every member of the family was required to be present. Furthermore, family discipline was maintained according to the gospel, for which I am very grateful to this day. My first and only reading books for a long while were the New Testament, the Catechism, the "Lutheran Hymn Book," published in 1828; "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," and the "Wonders of Nature and Providence."

The following incidents are among my first recollections of church-going. I sat with my good mother (the sexes occupying different

sides of the house); I wore a stove-pipe white beaver, with a silver cord and tassel arranged in some way on the side of it, which I thought was very nice and becoming. Another was a mystery, connected with the "*Dominie*," who occupied the goblet-shaped pulpit, over which hung the famed sounding-board, which I was fearing might some time fall on his head. When the preacher sat in the pulpit he was out of sight; when he arose to perform any part of his service, his head to me was just visible; and not noticing when he sat down, I wondered what had become of him, and noticing the hearers on the side galleries, which were not far from the pulpit, I concluded he must have jumped from his coop among them. Another thing which attracted my attention, was the way church collections were lifted. On either side of the pulpit there was hung on a nail a long pole with a black bag on the end, in the bottom of which there was suspended a small bell. These the deacons took down and passed around from seat to seat among the hearers. The bell served to arouse the sleepers, and to notify all to be in readiness with their contributions, so that there might be no

delay when the bag passed before them. By the way, I think the method was a convenient one, and not improved upon to this day.

An excellent feature of those days was the way children were trained—not only in industry, but modest behavior. They were taught to respect and honor their parents and superiors, and to be polite to strangers. They were required to maintain good behavior in the home, on the street, in church and in school, and other public places, attainments in which Young America of to day is lamentably deficient. Another peculiarity of those days was the spontaneous respect generally shown by the old and young to the ministers of the gospel, even by those who were non-professors, and the skeptical and wicked; also the general submission of the members of the church to the requirements or rulings of their official boards, a thing nearly obsolete in our advanced period.

About fifty years ago, the great religious revivals commenced, which, for ten years or more, swept with such marvelous saving power all over these parts, through which the churches were largely re-enforced by praying members.

I remember as a lad some of these scenes and incidents. Distinctly do I recollect some of those who were the laborers in and first fruits of those revivals. Pastor Wiëting, who commenced his ministry here in 1828, sowed faithfully the good seed of the kingdom, and laid down broad and firm the foundations of the gospel upon which to rear a spiritual superstructure of living stone. In about 1830 the harvest began to ripen, and the sheaves began to be gathered. The following were some of the fathers who co-operated in the work, and the families who were gathered about that time, viz., the Angels, Borsts, Collins, Dunckels, Empies, Fratts, Frances, Haines, Hillers, Houcks, Hallenbecks, Klings, Kniskerns, Loucks, Marckleys, Moellers, Myers, Merenesses, Ottmans, Rosenbergs, Sternbergs, Shanks, Stalls, Schutts, Sommers, Strails, Van Alstines, Weavers, Wises, Youngs. There were others, of course, whom I do not call to mind; these, their descendants, and others, gathered in during that first decade, were the perpetuators and supporters of these churches — the names and numbers gradually increasing, notwithstanding the waste by

deaths, removals, and, alas! defections. I think it due to those early converts, as a class, however, to say that they were in a remarkable degree zealous and faithful. Their conversions were pronounced, and of all of them, male and female, it could be said: "*Bethold, they pray.*" As opportunity offered they filled their places at public worship, at the preparatory and communion service, the prayer-meeting, etc. They also seemed to be largely in sympathy, mutually, and esteemed each other very highly for Christ's sake.

About a half century ago, a great moral revolution began in our country, which affected the Lutheran Church, and which reached this community. I refer to the "*Temperance*" and "*Anti-Slavery*" reforms, and the introduction of so-called "*new measures*" and of "*missionary enterprises*." I speak of these as a "*revolution*," because of the strife they inaugurated, and the opposition they encountered (excepting perhaps the last named), and the alienations and divisions they occasioned. Positions *pro* and *con* were taken, and maintained with possibly a good deal of intemperate and unchristian zeal on both sides. But there was a provi-

dence in the conflict, and the war was waged to a final victory for truth and right, so that now these moral and religious questions, so far as Christians are concerned, are settled beyond controversy.

The cause of "*Missions*," domestic and foreign, begun as a mustard-seed plant, has been steadily growing and developing, until to-day we can gratefully exclaim, "*Verily, what hath God wrought!*" And yet we are but in the dawn of this necessary and inevitable Gospel enterprise. Christians are just waking up to their duty in this direction, and to what its blessings and possibilities are.

To return to this field, I am not able to say how many members, during this half century, have been received into these churches—how many have died—how many have been dismissed by letter—how many have been excommunicated, or how many are now in "*good and regular standing*." But there is one fact of peculiar interest; that during those years, there have gone out from these two churches forming this pastoral district fifty years ago, some twenty ministers of the gospel—pastors who have been more or less successful in the Mas-

ter's vineyard. Of this number, two went astray, six have died, the remainder are still preaching the Word in different localities, with commendable success.

In the Lutheran Church in the United States, there have been great changes and improvements in these years, since 1831. To say nothing of the controversies, divisions, and alienations that have obtained, I rejoice to be able to say from a "*little one*," we have become the third in numbers, and a power in the land. At that time (1831), in round numbers, there were 10 synods, 200 ministers, 400 congregations, and less than 40,000 communicants. Now there are 57 synods, 3,225 ministers, 5,700 churches, and 715,000 communicants!

At that time the Lexington, S. C., College was just established. Pennsylvania College was organized the next year (1832). We had but two theological seminaries, Hartwick and Gettysburg. The *Lutheran Observer* made its first appearance in August, 1831. Now we have sixteen colleges, eighteen theological seminaries, and some eighty periodicals, printed in six different languages.

Fifty years ago, there were but few English churches, and in those few the German language was more or less used. Indeed, it was thought by many that the German language was indispensable to Lutheranism. The prejudices of our fathers against the English tongue, and their opposition to American ideas and feelings, greatly hindered the development of our Church, and was the means of driving multitudes of our children into other communions. To this day other churches thrive upon Lutheran material.

Until about fifty years ago, the advantages for English theological training were very meagre. True, Hartwick Seminary was established in 1816, and was doing a noble work; but until 1826 there was no English text-book on systematic divinity. That year Dr. S. S. Schinucker issued his translation of "Storr and Flatt." Fifty years ago, the form of worship in our Lutheran churches was very simple, consisting of singing, scripture-reading, prayer, preaching, prayer, singing, benediction. "No liturgical services, no confession of sins, no recitation of creeds, no responses." Dr. Morris says, "A few of our old German minis-

ters had a brief altar service, consisting of invocation and scripture lesson." He also says that fifty years ago, "neither the Augsburg Confession, nor any other creed, was regarded as obligatory upon ministers, although they were Evangelical and sturdy Lutherans in name." He also says that at that time Drs. Enders, Lochman, Hazelius, Miller, Bachman, Kurtz, and others, expressed views on the nature of the Lord's supper not in harmony with the symbols, or according to standard Lutheran divines."

But I must not further trespass on the time or patience of this meeting. I will only add that while we may thank God and take courage, there is much room for advancement and improvement; and may the God of all grace give us new courage and zeal for our mission, and crown with greater blessing our work in the Lord.

### MY YOUTHFUL DAYS.

REV. L. STERNBERG, D. D.

If, as is often said and commonly believed, "the boy is the father of the man," youth is not only the most important period of life, but

the most profitable for record and review. Impressed by this thought, in compliance with the request to furnish something for the volume that it is proposed to publish as a sort of resume of the convention held in the Gardnersville church, in Seward, Schoharie county, N. Y., on the 14th-17th of May last, I propose to relate in this article some of the incidents of my youthful days. I imagine that such a record, though it contain nothing striking or unusual, may interest some who participated in the convention, since I was born and reared only about two miles from where the convention was held.

I was born February 16th, 1814, being the youngest of eleven children. My father was a man of remarkable intellectual powers, of sound judgment, a good farmer, and of great mechanical skill. He was a self-made man, having gone to school but eight days in his life, his school having been broken up by the Revolutionary war at the beginning of his school days. Such was the desolation wrought in the Schoharie valley by the war, that when at its close the schools were re-opened, none could be spared to attend them who were old

enough to work. To this latter class my father belonged, as he was now seventeen years of age.

Of my mother I know not how to speak in fitting terms. In motherly attributes, many may have been her equals, but her superiors none. Eternity alone can reveal what I owe to her affectionate care, her pious example, her godly counsel, and her persevering prayers.

Though my parents, John and Anna Sternberg, have now for more than a generation rested side by side in the tomb, there must still be many in Schoharie county from whose minds their memory has not passed away. Such need no reminder of their virtues.

When I was born my mother at once dedicated me to God to serve him in the ministry; and as the Levites served about the temple, she wished me to be named Levi. Some objection was made because this name was not found among our kindred; but she insisted, and this name was given me in baptism.

At seven I commenced going to school. While I was fond of books, I was still more fond of play. In those days school government was mainly by the rod. I shared in this

discipline, though not as frequently as many others. One day I was punished twice, and once at least unjustly. I complained to my father. Said he, "The next time your teacher punishes you, tell me, and I will punish you too." I never complained to him again. At one time the boys were seized with the military ardor which most children experience. We formed ourselves into a regular company. I was elected captain. At recess we trained, marching with drum and fife, and with sticks, fowling-pieces, and pistols for arms. One of these pistols was loaded, and in inspecting arms I discharged it, and almost shot a boy. This ended our training at school.

There was considerable rivalry as to who should be at the head in the spelling-class. The contest was mainly between Gideon Empie and myself, but he was rather too much for me.

We had during my school days a succession of superior teachers; I doubt whether any other district in the county was in this respect so highly favored as ours. The brothers, James, Abraham, and Isaac Mereness, successively taught our school for a number of years, and did their work well. Besides the ordinary

English branches, I studied in that school Latin and French. One of the happiest moments of my life was when my father came home from Albany, and brought me a Murray's English and an Adams' Latin grammar.

My mother did not neglect to impress upon my mind the fact that I was dedicated to God in the work of the ministry. This impression was deepened by the venerable Dr. E. L. Hazelius. He frequently visited at my father's, and would take me between his knees and tell me I must come to Hartwick when I should be old enough, and study for the ministry. On one of these occasions he taught me how to set down the answer to an example in addition without performing the operation, only writing several more rows of figures after the answer had been given, and I never forgot it.

At twelve I left the district school, and studied for two years with the Rev. A. Crownse, who was then our pastor. I was also a member of his class of catechumens, and committed Luther's smaller catechism.

I went to Hartwick as a student in the spring of 1828. Though I then knew nothing of experimental religion, yet I was seriously inclined,

and fully intended to study for the ministry. I am sorry to say that under the influence of thoughtless companions my serious impressions were gradually dissipated, and I gave up all idea of studying for the ministry, and resolved to study law. This was exceedingly distasteful to my parents. My mother's faith did not fail, nor did she relax in faithful admonition and prayer. During this time Dr. Hazelius left Hartwick, and Dr. Miller became Principal. His preaching was instructive, but not calculated to arrest the attention of the thoughtless. It, however, awakened serious thought in my mind. I was gradually led to see my need of a Saviour, to pray for forgiveness and divine assistance. My room-mate at that time, at Clark Davison's, was M. J. Stover. He was of great assistance to me in the commencement of my religious life. I shortly after this made a public profession of religion, being confirmed in the Sharon church by the Rev. P. Wieting. There were some fifteen or twenty persons confirmed at the same time. Among them the only one I remember was then Henrietta Miller, but now Mrs. S. Beekman. I called on her when I was East in 1879, and in

seeing her was forcibly struck by the changes time has wrought. The saddest change was the fact that she seemed to have been weaned away from the house of God. It was not long after this that the first "four days' meeting" was held in the Sharon church. At these meetings nearly the whole Synod came together, and for four days the time was spent in religious services. That meeting was one of wonderful power. I threw myself into it with my whole soul. I labored with my young companions, particularly Augustus Miller. When he found peace in believing, I introduced him to his father as one adopted into the family of God. The Doctor embraced him with tears, and thanked me for what I had done for him, saying that he found it easier to talk to any one on the subject of religion than to his own children. I have since been privileged to lead many a soul to Christ, but the sweetness of that first conquest for the Saviour has never been exceeded.

When I had given my heart to the Saviour, I had no further hesitation about consecrating myself to his service in the ministry. To this end in future my studies were directed. My

father died before they were completed, but my mother lived to hear me preach as an ordained minister of the Gospel.

Now, after a ministry of nearly half a century, I thank God that my life was so early directed into this path of usefulness. Its rewards are incomparably greater than can be reaped from the largest worldly success. Though many have been blessed with more abundant fruits of their labors than I have; yet in every harvest-field where I have labored I have been enabled to gather some precious sheaves for the Master, as well as in my many years of teaching to aid in preparing other laborers who are now reaping in the fields "white unto the harvest," or have been called to their reward.

### RELICS OF THE REFORMATION IN WITTENBERG.

REV. D. VAN ALSTINE, D. D.

On the tenth day of December next, it will be three hundred and sixty-one years since Martin Luther burned the papal bull excommunicating him from the Roman Catholic Church. Early in the morning of that day,

the professors and students of the University, and many of the citizens of Wittenberg, came together near the Elster gate, just outside of the city walls. A fire was soon kindled and blazing. The bravest man in all Europe—then thirty-seven years old—approached the flames and flung into them several obnoxious documents ; and then, holding aloft in his hand the bull of excommunication of Pope Leo X., he shouted in stentorian voice : “*Since thou hast afflicted the Lord’s Holy One, may fire unquenchable afflict and consume thee ;*” and he cast it into the flames. He returned to the University amid the applause of professors and students and citizens. It was one of the most daring acts of the sixteenth century. He trampled contemptuously on the supreme papal authority of all Europe.

On the seventh day of last September, I stood in the shade of the oak-tree which now marks and commemorates the spot where Luther performed this brave act. As I stood there and called around me the scene of the past, a new inspiration and firmer resolve came over me to repudiate what is false, and to stand loyal to God’s truth everywhere.

## WITTENBERG.\*

The city is in the province of Saxony, on the crooked river Elbe, midway between Berlin on the north, and Leipsic on the south. It is an old walled town, with ancient streets and buildings, a garrison for soldiers, and a present population of about 12,500. It is not inviting in its general appearance, but it abounds with relics and memorials of past centuries. It was the cradle of the German Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was the home of Luther and Melanchthon for many years, and their work was largely accomplished here. These two men were quite unlike, and in some respects the contrast was very striking. And still they were well matched, and needful to the work they had in hand. Luther was the more fearless, daring, and stormy man—the man to handle the sledge-hammer in smiting the hoary wrongs under the protection of civil and ecclesiastical authority ; Melanchthon was the more sedate, serenely meditative, and scholarly man—he was the better systematic theologian. I took some pains, while in Wittenberg, to see and examine some of the relics that still remain of

these distinguished and godly men. I will give a brief but necessarily imperfect record of some of the things which specially interested me.

#### LUTHER'S HOME.

The University of Wittenberg was founded by the distinguished Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, in 1502. He called Luther, then a monk at Erfurt, to the professorship of scholastic philosophy in the University in 1508. He at once became popular as a lecturer in the old scholastic philosophy, and especially so in his fresh and luminous lectures on the Holy Scriptures. The Bible in his hands became a new book to the people. While thus teaching and preaching, the Reformation began to dawn, and to break in like the coming of a new day. New conceptions and forms of thought began to break away from the old creed and customs of the Roman church; and the uproar and tumult soon came in.

The home of Luther, where he taught and lived many years, is a massive stone structure in the Kellegian Strasse. There are in the building several rooms closely associated with his life and work. In one of them is his writing

table, gradually decaying, the top of which slides from a deep drawer below, in which he was wont to deposit his manuscripts and writing materials. His old double-seated chair, in which he and his wife Catherine often sat in the evening twilight for social chats, and which contains a eulogy on Luther's domestic affections, still remains. There is a curious parlor stove, having five stories, and about six feet high, constructed after his own design, and with the side-panels of each story decorated with representative figures in relief. Four of these figures represent the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and quite a number represent the arts and sciences, as mathematics, geometry, painting and music. Its fire has long since gone out; but it remains still a unique piece of mechanism. There is also a bust which is said to have been taken immediately after he died, and which probably gives a very correct outline of his face and head. The craggy brow, and the stern, sincere, and earnest expression of the face, seem characteristic of the man. In an adjoining room is a painting of the Council at Worms in 1521, in a frame of beech-wood from a tree memorable

in his history. In a side-case are various trinkets once belonging to him. I noticed his beer-cup—Germans, even *then* as *now*, drank beer—and a glass goblet, which was broken by Peter the Great, the Czar of Russia, when on a visit to the city in 1712. He wanted the goblet to take with him as a memento, and when it was refused, he showed his indignation by striking it a blow with his cane. The broken pieces still lie there, and the broken goblet not only speaks of the great Luther, but also of the childish passion of Peter the Great. The large room in which Luther gave class instruction to the students, and where he also frequently lectured and preached, has an air of special interest about it. It seems well adapted to the purposes for which it was used. There is a low platform on which he usually stood, and in its rear and a few steps higher is the long and narrow pulpit. Let any one thoughtfully stand there on the platform and in the pulpit where the heroic Luther so often stood, and where he poured the light and truth of heaven into the minds of hundreds of young men who came to the University from all parts of Germany, and he will have impressions and reflections aroused

not easily to be spoken of. In this room is a likeness of Luther, painted by Lucas Cranach while the Reformer was still living, and I was told that it was regarded as the most correct and best likeness in existence. It is very striking and impressive. The courageous soul is there, and looks straight at you. There is thunder in the face and brow, with soft and mild sunshine beyond it all.

#### MELANCHTHON'S HOME.

On the same street, and not far off, was the home of Melanchthon. The change of his German name, Schwarzerd, to the corresponding Greek, Melanchthon, illustrates a custom somewhat common among literary men of that age. Erasmus, changed from the German, Gerard, to the Greek, Erasmus, is another instance of the same sort. The house in which Melanchthon studied and lived is a solid, but not an elegant stone structure. The outside door is large and heavy, and is divided horizontally after the old German style. A large square room in the second story served him as a study, sitting room, and sleeping apartment, and in which he died April 19th, 1560. There was a strange

influence in the room to me. From it his soul went to heaven. The only thing remaining of special interest is a very large oaken chest, once richly decorated with carving, and having a huge and curious lock. Inside are divisions and cells, once filled with valuable papers and manuscripts. In the rear of the house is a garden enclosed with a high brick wall, and contains a well and several trees and some shrubbery. In this garden is a round stone table, still in good condition, at which Luther and Melanchthon frequently partook of luncheon together, and passed hours in private conversation. A private gateway and passage through the wall of the garden—now closed up—led to Luther's home, not far off. As I sat at this stone table, under the shade of the trees, and with such surroundings about me, it was not difficult to transport myself back into the past, and to imagine these Reformers there, talking over the interests of the great cause they both had at heart. How unlike, physically and mentally, these men; and yet how well adapted each was to the special work which God gave him!

## THE SCHLOSSKIRCHE.

This is the Castle church ; and is the church in which the Elector of Saxony, when in Wittenberg, was wont to worship. On the evening of October 31st, 1517, Luther affixed to the doors of this church his ninety-five theses against papal indulgences. It was on the day when the city was unusually crowded with people, to be present at the feast of All Saints ; and the excitement and commotion became exceedingly intense. The wooden doors to which the theses were affixed were burned during the bombardment of the city in 1760 ; but they have been replaced by bronze doors, on which are engraved the ninety-five original theses in Latin. Over these doors is a scene of Christ on the cross ; and Luther is seen kneeling on the right, and Melanchthon on the left of it. In this church Luther very often preached, and many of his most stirring and effective sermons. Both these eminent men were buried here. The guide will raise for you a trap door ; and you see an inscription on a bronze plate, indicating where the mortal remains of these men were deposited. You are standing on the confines of mortal life, and look into the great beyond !

The Stadtkirche is in another part of the city, and in it Luther frequently preached; and it has various memorials of the Reformation. There are a number of paintings by Cranach; one a scene of the communion in 1522, when for the first time the bread and wine were distributed to the laity; and another a baptismal scene, in which the infant is immersed; and portraits of some of the renowned Reformers. There stands a bronze font, cast by Hermann Visher, of Nuremberg, in 1457, on which are figures in relief of the Apostles; and among them is Peter with a large key in one hand. The wonder to me was why the Reformers did not remove this Catholic emblem.

In the old Rathhaus, or as we should call it Town Hall, are many relics of the past, and several that relate to Luther and his day. I felt special interest in his hour-glass. It is still in perfect condition, and as capable of measuring the hours of the day as when it was turned by his hand three hundred and fifty years ago. His brave heart then beat the hours of the day for a limited number of years, and then came to its final pause forevermore;

but his hour-glass is ready still to do its office. I saw its grains of sand noiselessly trickling from the upper to the lower chamber.

#### THE MONUMENTS.

In the Market-place, a large public square in front of the old Rathhaus, are the bronze statues of Luther and Melanchthon, under Gothic canopies. Both are well executed, and characteristic of the men.

Luther is represented in the attitude of speaking to the people. He holds in his hand an open Bible, while he utters the words, "*Glaubet an des Evangelium;*" and thus urges them to believe in the gospel. On the one side of his monument are engraven the words:

*"Ein' feste Burg  
Ist unser Gott,"*

words taken from an immortal hymn that he composed. On the other side are the words so expressive of his faith : "*Ist's Gottes Werk so  
wirds bestehn; ist's Menchen Werk wirds un-  
tergehn.*"

Melanchthon's statue does not indicate the preacher, but the scholar. It has a severe, composed, meditative expression in all its parts.

It has an appropriate reference to Psalm cxix. 46: "I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed." Another to Eph. iv. 3.

These men accomplished their work and departed; and now, after more than three centuries, the moral atmosphere of Germany is still fragrant with the influence of their names. Being dead, they yet speak. Catholicism still lingers in Wittenberg. Its priests still walk its streets, but in an atmosphere uncongenial to them. Catholicism is like a perishing tree, that has been smitten and splintered by the lightning of heaven.

Benefited by what I had seen and felt, I left Wittenberg for Berlin, the capital of the German Empire.

*Hornellsville, N. Y., Aug., 1881.*

## THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT.

### PASTOR.

Given, the unity of the Godhead, and the unity of the human race: does harmony, universal and uninterrupted, follow as a consequence? How can it be otherwise? Is God the author of discord? With the same origin,

the same nature, the same necessities, the same liabilities, the same destiny, the same source of supplies; with so many mutual dependencies, so many strong affinities, can man become inimical to his fellow man? Alas for logic when confronted by facts! Milton's astounding utterance is not more poetic than truthful:

" Devils with devils damned firm concord hold,  
Men only disagree."

Alienation from God, mutual antagonism as between men, individually and associationally, what words better express the moral condition of the race?

For the solution of this strange problem, we must consult, not philosophy, but Revelation. The disturbing element is sin; and the Bible furnishes the only explanation of its introduction. And the Bible teaches us that man was created in the image of God; that he fell by disobedience; that enmity against his Maker and against his fellow man was engendered in his depravity. It is the fruit of sin, if not sin itself. And if history proves but one thing, that one thing is the fact that the endless and the endlessly diversified conten-

tions of human beings are never to be harmonized by any of the modifications of natural affection ; by the corrective influences of public sentiment ; by the elevating tendencies of education ; nor yet by any concentration of the circumstantial forces which may be brought to bear against them. They have continued through every age, defied every type of civilization, and have never been more numerous, relentless, and incorrigible, than as occasioned and sustained by what the world has consented to call religion.

After interminable wars and bloodshed between nations, and the fiercest persecutions and most implacable enmities among religious sects, the children of peace, as the last source of hope, have turned their longing eyes towards the Christian system, and they seem to rest in a common conviction that if the elements of harmony are not found here, the reign of discord must be eternal. Law, though invested with divine authority, as a controlling power, has been universally found to be a failure. It can only have supremacy among holy beings. Man is fallen and depraved. But we are not now under law, but under grace. This new or-

der of things is not intended to supplant the old, but to supplement it. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," is proposed to be accomplished by the transforming and sustaining agency of the Holy Spirit, with whose advent the Christian dispensation commenced. It remains, therefore, to be seen whether this peculiar and parenthetical economy does or is designed to establish the reign of peace on earth.

The prophetic designation of the Great Founder as the Prince of Peace; the heavenly chorus with which his advent was heralded, "On earth peace"—the memorable prayer for believers, in which Christ seems to contemplate the grand result of his mission, "that they may all be one"—and many other items of like import, are certainly very suggestive of the pacific designs, measures, and contemplated achievements of the Gospel of Christ. Nor is the hope thus inspired in the least discouraged by apostolic instructions. How directly and severely envying and strife and divisions are rebuked! "Are ye not carnal?" How clearly and how emphatically believers are required to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind

and in the same judgment." And surely, these sweet notes, in such perfect accord with all our conceptions of what should be, and with our most confident expectations of what is to be, are not intended to misdirect our aspirations and eventuate in final disappointment.

But let us bear in mind that our blindness and our blunders are not chargeable upon the Divine unfoldings. If futile hopes are founded upon false interpretations of the word of God, and traditional superstitions are sought to be supported by fragmentary passages, let us hold ourselves responsible for all consequent confusion and contradictions. Harmonizing theories and movements, contemplating the control of mere externalities, have made little impression upon the discordant condition of a fallen race. They never will, they never can, for the reason that they leave the causes and the only effective remedies out of the account. Such movements are like attempts to regulate machinery by means which do not reach the motive power.

Somewhere, sooner or later, we shall surely encounter and accept the great fundamental truth that peace is the fruit of *conquest*, not of *conciliation*. Truth and error, right and wrong,

are essentially and eternally in antagonism. In their nature and in their tendencies they are directly and designedly at variance. There should not be, there cannot be, either compromise or armistice between them. Effect, propose even, a conservative reconciliation between truth and error, you make truth itself erratic in the concession, and invest error with a power which does not belong to it. And every offer to suspend hostilities gives error advantages which of itself it can never secure. Truth contemplates, not subjugation, but transformation; not the acknowledgment of its supremacy, but the extermination of everything at variance with itself. Hence the conflict that has existed so long and raged so fiercely, is to be continued without cessation, until "all things are put under the feet" of Him who only is the manifest embodiment of truth.

"Think not," said Jesus, at the very commencement of His ministry, as if He would at once and forever dissipate the fatal delusion, so prevalent then, and so prevalent still, that, regardless of character, the gospel was intended to bring the human family into a state of harmony—"think not that I came to send peace

upon the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." And how fully His ministry exemplified that astounding statement! His precursor, though only acting in the twilight of the coming dawn, was beheaded. Family distractions resulted from the Master's own preaching. The social, political, and religious departments were not only excited, but embroiled by it. The terrible war of words, thoughts and feelings, producing a perfect tumult wherever He went, became deeper, more general, and more determined, until He became the object of its concentrated force, and His crucifixion attested the insatiable malignity of the spirit by which it was controlled. And what followed? Accepted history claims that eleven of the twelve apostles met death by violence. Persecutions, increased in number, in extent, in severity, and kept pace with the spread of Christianity during several of the first centuries. And it may as well be said at once, and in a single word, that the history of the Church, from the apostolic era to the present day, is but a record of endlessly diversified forms of the same great contest, and no interposing power has been effective in its repression.

Now let attention be directed to another point of scarcely less imposing interest. It is often said that man is a religious being. But this is only a part of the truth, and a very indefinite statement at that. Many a senseless theory has been built upon it. There is a class of half truths which are the most mischievous of errors, and this is one of that class. It is a limitation of the Divine claims. It places a part of man's being beyond God's jurisdiction. Everything is religious which is answerable to the will of God, and may redound to his glory. The idea is not that man has so many and such religious elements as to render him capable of becoming religious. This seems to be all that is implied by the trite expression under review. The real truth is that human nature is essentially religious in all its facts and phases, in all its powers and susceptibilities. Religion is the fundamental idea of humanity. And it is not the less religious because it is depraved. Paradoxical as the statement may seem, it is nevertheless the fact, that religion is the centre and circumference of all the incongruities, contradictions and absurdities of which the mind of man is capable. What is depravity, what is sin,

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what are antagonisms in the moral world, but disturbances of the elemental harmony of our nature? Its forces are thrown out of their proper bearings not only, but in opposition to each other. All of the passions, and most of the emotions are disloyal to conscience, and reason is led captive by the imagination. Hence the irregularities, the alternations, the extremities, the fanaticisms, the errors, in a word, the conflicts, which make up human character and human history. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other." The conflict is unceasing and irrepressible. It is often modified, but never wholly suspended by the conditions of life. It disturbs individuality, it distracts the social relations. It is the Babel by which the language of the race is confounded. Business is a system of mutual distrust and of alternate supremacy of labor and capital. Political economy as practically exemplified, is a game of chance which parties, hopelessly corrupt, play with the masses, the secret of the game being misrepresentation and money. And religion—what is it, what can it be, but a ceaseless strug-

gle with these opposing elements? Only by the most persistent self-defense does the church maintain its organic existence. And so far as its offensive movements are concerned, every step of progress is taken in the face of formidable opposition.

This is the only explanation we can have of the discords and distractions which make up so large a proportion of the history of our race. All have their origin in the conflict between truth and error, between right and wrong. And what is error, but truth distorted, misapplied, rejected? And what is wrong but right held too rigidly, compromised, turned out of its course!

Why pursue this line of thought further? We see already why it is and how it is that religion in all its aspects is a ceaseless succession of struggles. In the present state of things it can never be anything else. It is indeed the mystery of mysteries. And yet it is the only explanation of the existing economy, so far as it can be explained. That the purest faith and the rankest infidelity; the most unsullied virtue and the most loathsome vice; the holiest sympathies and the most hardened prejudices; the

bleeding heart of mercy and the bloody front of tyranny; the persuasive influences of kindness and the relentless freaks of persecution, in all conceivable modifications are in constant conflict is simply a fact of observation and experience. In yielding to the noble aspirations of a Paul, one is sure to encounter the sordid lusts of Simon Magus. The simple, trustful, unpretentious and yet wonderfully effective endeavors of Moody, are confronted by the sparkling but silly, sometimes dignified, oftener disgusting, frequently attractive, but always abortive utterances of Ingersoll. And these, with countless numbers more, are only divergent lines of life and influence, all having their origin in the great central struggle, to a greater or less extent modified and directed by man's own volition. Why the change from the old to the new dispensation and what the character of the transition, but a conflict between the distinguishing peculiarities of each? The old system, as first instituted, was singularly simple and beautifully adapted to the condition of the people at that time. But it became corrupted and disfigured by countless interpolations and traditions until it became more human than

Divine, more erratic than truthful, more degrading than elevating. Revision, reformation, transformation, or the utter abandonment of the race, was the only alternative. The new system was not intended to supplant what was truthful and suitable in the old, but to remove the *effete* accumulations of ages, to relieve the friends of virtue and godliness of the cumbersome burdens and distasteful improprieties which, during the lapse of those ages, had been made as concessions to the hard and depraved heart of the race. And how protracted and fierce the war between Judaism and Christianity!

Shall we pause to ask about the origin and character of that glorious event, which, by way of eminence, is called the Reformation, and of which, after all, Lutheranism is but a synonym? Why was that Reformation necessary? How was it brought about? What have been its consequences? Was there ever a more tumultuous commotion of the moral elements? Was there ever a revolution more characteristically religious? Did ever a contest occur in which everything desirable depended more clearly, so far as human effort was concerned,

upon unfaltering firmness, unyielding perseverance, in which everything would more certainly have been sacrificed and lost by compromise and conciliation? Who has pondered the numerous expedients resorted to to quiet the belligerent forces, without feeling that, firm as were the distinguished men who stood in the van of the battle, the concessions they made were their greatest mistakes! The inevitable tendencies of the religious masses to accept all sorts of errors which palliate and justify prevalent vices; the singular tenacity with which certain classes cling to popular usages, however corrupt; the obstinate determination with which such usages are defended against all attempts at innovation, and the remarkable sensitiveness with which all controversy relating to them is regarded, were never more strikingly exemplified than during the progress of this great, this glorious revolution. And, of course, the directly opposite tendencies and peculiarities were equally apparent. Had abuses been left unexposed and truth left untold, all would have been quiet and remained as it was. Had the corruptions of the Church of Rome not been assailed with as much or more spirit and

decision than they were maintained and vindicated with, the cause of Protestantism would soon have been overwhelmed.

And now, if after taking this brief, disconnected, and very imperfect view of what in the nature of things must be, and what from the dawn of Christianity—and long before—has been, we turn our attention to the conflicts of our own times, they need neither surprise nor annoy us. We cannot but see that in accordance with the logic of events, they have been unavoidable. Movements so limited in extent and so comparatively inconsiderable in their importance as have been our synodical controversies, are by no means exceptions to the general law. They came, because in the inevitable order of things, they were not to be avoided; and it was best they should come. True enough, many undesirable things came with them. But do we not yet know that evils, many and serious, are inseparably associated with reforms and progress at all times and under all circumstances! These evils are the abuses of a good thing, and are not to be named as arguments against it. Do not even ask who is to blame, or most to blame for them.

The greatest evils are the abuses of the greatest good. Hence, in the judgment of the superficial observer, those are most censurable, who really are most to be commended. The most stupendous wrongs occur where there are the most momentous interests at stake. The conflict of thought and feeling may be as honest as it is inevitable. And there is no wrong in this. The evils of controversy arise from partisan blindness and a disregard to truth and right. Selfish excitement causes misapprehension and misrepresentation, and parties become more anxious to clear themselves and criminate others, than to arrive at and abide by truth and right. And so in the synodical troubles through which we have passed, criminations and recriminations did occur to a most deplorable extent, and with the most deplorable consequences. Would it had been otherwise. But in our regrets for whatever was wrong, shall we overlook or fail to appreciate whatever has been right and good? Can we wish the condition of the religious community back to where it was half a century ago? Nor is it at all probable that a like transformation could now occur with less incidental damage to the

cause of Christ. We may and we should sorrow over the imperfections and weaknesses of our common humanity, as brought to view in those dissensions, and elsewhere. But we shall certainly exemplify them not less sorrowfully if we fail to learn the lessons of wisdom and to improve the signal advantages which, consequent upon those dissensions, have been brought within our reach.

Our present Re-union and its antecedents have been the outcome of that irrepressible conflict in which the Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod had its origin, and of the continuance and expansion of which it became the occasion. Without wishing to imply the slightest reproach upon those with whom we were involved in this conflict, but simply insisting that it belongs to that order of things which contemplates peace as the final fruit of conquest, it seems befitting that we should be reminded, as a part of these exercises, that so far as we have been loyal to our convictions and faithful to the word of God as the only rule of faith and practice, we have been acting in the line of the Divine purposes, and we are not to anticipate that the war between right and wrong,

truth and error will cease, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Of the healthful fruits of the particular contest to which allusion has been made, we are to hear from others.

### HEALTHFUL TENDENCIES.

REV. J. A. ROSENBERG.

"First pure, then peaceable."

*Purity*, is the basis of peace. It is the essential condition. Purity must be secured, at whatever cost, before peace can be enjoyed, either morally or politically. The opposite condition may be likened to volcanic forces. They may slumber for a time but they are only latent.

They will develop, and convulsions, fearful upheavals and ruin, will be the result. Peace follows only when these forces become exhausted.

The elements of antagonism to a healthful condition involve a like state of things. A maimed limb cannot perform its functions. Its restoration may involve an operation, causing both cost and pain.

So, to secure peace in the heart, in the Church and in the community, antagonizing forces must be met, if they are to be subdued. This may, and usually does, involve more or less conflict. Often, there is a long and bitter war, terminating when one or the other is destroyed.

In the present state of things in the world, *is this wrong?* Let the Master answer. "*I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword.*" There *must* be war against all wrong, against all moral deadness and lifeless formality.

This principle is abundantly established by the testimony of history. *The world has ever been a battle ground—a scene of struggle and conflict.* Its history affords a record of little else. Right has usually been compelled to struggle for existence; and, to *obtain the mastery*, it has been needful to battle long and hard.

When God would have a people, qualified to become the depositaries of divine revelation, and proper possessors of "a land flowing with milk and honey," they must first become prepared through trial. The possession was preceded by Egyptian bondage—the sufferings of the wilderness—and the stern realities of war.

They must conquer a name and a place in order to rear their long-hoped-for nationality.

Christ came as the world's Redeemer, but Christ was crucified. Paul went on his mission of mercy, but it was amid hardships and death. The Reformer of the sixteenth century was no exception. What bitter trials, terrible conflicts and herculean labors became necessary, that the errors of Rome might be exposed—that the world might have an open Bible, and that there might be an emancipated church.

The trials and battles of Israel culminated in the possession of Canaan, the grand kingdom of David, the *magnificent reign of Solomon*, with wealth, power, culture and the beautiful and wonderful temple. They secured the presence and guidance of God. Their subsequent wonderful history still affords streams of blessings to the world. Europe has her high civilization—England her Magna Charta—America her political liberty—all through the same instrumentality.

Surely, it may be said “*war* is not an unmixed evil.” It is terrible in its immediate operations. The occasion for it is ever to be deprecated. But it is often the only resort, if there is to be relief from that which is worse.

As another illustration of this principle, we name the present advanced *status* of the Lutheran Church. A great change has been effected during the past half century. This is true of her numerical strength, doctrinal position, effective operations, and pietistic tendencies. Numerically, her strides have been rapid. Her doctrinal position is so well defined that there is no occasion for controversy. It is true her venerable Confession stands intact. But, with the authorized *addendum* of 1864 there is no ground for misapprehension. There is room for improvement, it is true, in much of the spirit that prevails within her borders. It is not to be supposed that the oak will mature in a day. Progress demands time. It cannot be doubted that the spirit that now largely prevails, the modes and extent of the operation that obtain, the degree of effective piety developed, and the means applied for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, are far in advance of the state of things fifty years ago. *There is progress.* There is a growing tendency towards a greater harmony with the *spirit* of truth and the Reformation, rather than with the mere letter.

In this locality, the state of the Church and the standards of religion that obtained are matters both of memory and of history. On this territory, the pivotal point of which we now occupy, were two small churches, with a combined membership of about seventy. These constituted the pastorate, and formed the centre of the forces put into operation. Of the moral aspect of the field we do not especially speak. That it was not of a high order, there is no room for doubt. From the numbers identified with these churches, the tone of training they had received, and the general aspect of morals throughout the community, the outlook could not have been very hopeful. But movements were inaugurated and forces brought to bear that cannot here claim our attention. Whether these movements were wise —called for and justified by the existing state of things, the sequel cannot leave in doubt. A tree must be judged by its fruit. The results of any given effort will show the measure of wisdom involved. As might have been expected, contentions and some bitter alienations were among the first tendencies developed. This, though involving no gain to either party,

was but a natural result. Reforms involve opposition, and are often attended with bitter controversies and life-long animosities.

But let not the fact be overlooked that this state of things may come from minds equally honest. All may not be chargeable with dishonesty or be regarded as inspired by evil, though they may oppose what we approve. There are different degrees of light, of capacity, different standards of action. There may be an honest zeal, though not according to knowledge. But can any healthful conditions grow out of these things? The answer must be in the affirmative. This is but to accept the common teachings of the Word's history.

The controversies of the sixteenth century were long and bitter, but they culminated in the grand Confession of Augsburg, and made the wonderful achievements of modern Protestantism possible. The errors and corruptions of Rome were laid bare. The thunderbolts of truth caused the papal hierarchy to totter to its fall, and lifted the merciless foot of oppression from the subject nations of the world.

We boast of the advanced condition of the present age, of modern liberty, of wonderful

achievements, and point to results with pride and gratification. But these are the out-growth of the Reformation age.

The same may be said of the political field. King George lost his colonies — America gained her independence and a grand nationality—by means of like agencies. And this too may be said of the agitations that culminated in that condition wherein the flag is no longer “a flaunting lie.” The American soil is free.

Controversies, in themselves, are unpleasant, and are to be deprecated; but like the storm, the ebb and flow of the sea, while some damage may be effected, a higher degree of purity is the result.

Among the benefits flowing from the agitation here, we name a better and higher ideal of genuine Christianity. This may be said of the *sense* of moral obligation developed; whatever the practice, the understanding now is *clear*.

A mere connection with the church does not save. This is needful, but much more is needful. It will no longer do to be equally at home in the church, at the sacramental feasts, and then in the associations and practices of vice. These things are not now tolerated. Character

is weighed by something like the true standard; and not many mistakes are made in the judgment formed. A standard of morals may be wrong; the out-growth, like the stream, can rise no higher than the fountain.

We do not contend that the *ideal* of Christianity is *now* what it ought to be. There is still room for great improvement; but here there is progress towards the right. May the good work go on till the church shall become "a city on a hill." Again the laity were brought to the cultivation of personal piety, the employment of their talents, and their co-operation in aid of each other and the work of the ministry.

There were family devotions, meetings for prayer and mutual aid, and personal work in the public assembly--thus co-operation with the pastor in the promotion of good. As a result, personal piety was largely cultivated, and encouragements were afforded that enabled many to endure "as good soldiers." A growing devotion to the church was apparent. Evil was restrained; the forces of moral power were largely augmented.

We cannot here note the aspirations that

were enkindled, the talents that were called into activity, and the lives that were consecrated on God's altar. Nor need I speak of the number and intellectual status of those who were here so touched with the fires of the altar, that they felt constrained to consecrate their lives to the sowing of the precious seed in other fields. The number, that have gone from this church as heralds of the cross, has been a matter of wonder and of comment. The extent and character of the work they have done and are doing, cannot be estimated. Suffice it to say, churches have been multiplied and maintained. The same spirit has been elsewhere inculcated. Other ecclesiastical organizations have felt its power, and its leaven has been largely diffused. With gratitude to God, we may with joy commemorate the achievements of grace.

Let us sacredly cherish the memory of the noble fathers, who dared to follow and maintain the right. Let their virtues and courage find active imitators in those that survive them. To us has descended a noble heritage; the same spirit and fearless courage have yet a wide field for operation.

In conclusion, we express the hope that this church, which has been so signally favored in the past—constituting a centre from which so much good has emanated—may not only maintain her high position, but become more efficient in the highest style of life and work, that which Chrjst demands.

### ULTIMATE RESULTS.

REV. W. H. SHELLAND.

(Delivered extemporaneously, and written from memory.)

The ultimate results are divine, both in their appointment and nature; hence the irrepressible conflict is inevitable. The Divine order of things is “First pure, then peaceable.” But the whole human family is defiled with sin. Moral derangement and pollution reign everywhere. “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now,” seeking for deliverance from its bondage and reaching toward the *Ultimate Results*. Hence the revolutions and convulsions that shake the nations, overturn kingdoms, sweep away empires, make tyrants tremble and crowned heads quake with fear. The means used are not always the best;

but, under the Divine direction, are aids in the conflict; for He who controls all things after the counsels of His own will, makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder He restrains. We rejoice therefore in those *healthful* tendencies brought to view by the last speaker.

Experience and Scriptures assure us that the desired results can only be attained by conflict. Compromise is *defeat*. This is an error frequently committed by the Church. Conformity to the world is fatal to her interests. If she makes peace the ultimate object, her purity is sacrificed. If there be life, there must be conflict till the object is realized, for righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness, and light hath no communion with darkness. Christ hath no concord with Belial, and the believer hath no part with an infidel.

Some years ago, I asked a minister if the members of his church were harmonious and united. "Why—yes," said he, "They are united; the same as the particles of an iceberg are united." Such a state of things is deplorable. It is the precursor of death. God in mercy sometimes stirreth up his people, as "an

eagle stirreth up her nest." The struggle must go on. It may be necessary as a discipline for each one of us. Surely the victory is grand in proportion to the severity of the fight. The crown will be all the more acceptable if the cross has been heavy. The reward will be all the sweeter if in order to obtain it we have struggled through hardships and discouragements, hoped against hope, and believed what seemed impossible, because God had said it. As to the precise nature of the ultimate results, we can only say, they will be grand beyond description or conception. If the natural man is unable to conceive what God hath revealed to his children here, much less are we able to comprehend the purity, the perfection, the glory that shall be revealed at the last day." Suffice it to say, *It will be all that God can make it.* The joy, the happiness, the harps, the songs, the crowns, the glory! It is overwhelming. The soul melts with the view, and cries out, "It is enough." By faith she grasps the goal already, and sings salvation to our God who hath given us the victory and secured for us the ultimate results.

*But are these results sure? Shall purity,*

perfection, glory, be reached? We answer Yes. God has promised it. Much has already been gained. Many a victory has been won. The steady march of events assures us of success. The great wheel which Ezekiel saw is rolling on. It turns not to the right or the left, nor will it stop till "He who is over all" shall give it command. The victory has seemed to be now on one side, then on the other, but it is evident that great advancement has been made. God is at the helm. His mighty power is moving on this work. In his own good time he will finish it. It will not delay. Soon the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord. Soon the heathen shall be given to Him for an inheritance. The nations of the earth shall bow at His feet and own Him Lord of all. Then shall the conflict cease. Then shall the nations learn war no more. Then shall He come forth in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels, and the shouts of victory shall echo and re-echo through the regions of glory, and Satan with his minions shall be driven back to his place and chained in dark despair forever.

THE DISTINCTIVE MISSION OF LUTH-  
ANISM. HOW IS IT TO BE  
ACCOMPLISHED?

REV. H. A. STRAIL.

My subject supposes the assignment of a particular mission to the several branches of the Christian Church; a supposition founded upon, and supported by God's most Holy Word. "The Son of Man is as a man taking his journey into a far country, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work." The apostle Paul recognized this view, when at the beginning of the new life he inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Everything of, and about us, confirms the voice of inspiration. Our wonderfully constructed bodies, and our still more wonderfully constituted minds, both argue that we exist for a purpose; that we were created for active operations. When it is once determined in what this activity is to consist, the next question of importance is, "how is the work to be accomplished?"

To my mind, one question of importance

arises just here, the settlement of which will be of greatest value in determining the way to success. Whence have we our commission? "Is it from heaven, or is it earth-born?" Did it originate in the mind of the great Creator, or is it a product of creature mind? If we are self-constituted commissioners, seeking some earthly good, a mere human attainment, the sooner our failure is realized the better for all concerned; but if God has spoken unto us, and stamped our commission with the authority of His great name, the sooner we awake to a consciousness of the fact, and the people to whom we are sent are made to believe it, the better will we be qualified to push the contest on to victory. When Moses was constituted a leader unto the children of Israel, the "thus saith the Lord," gave him influence and authority which he could have nowhere else acquired. So too, we must realize and the people believe that we "have a message from God unto them." Now while I hold in contempt all efforts toward egotism and self-righteousness, with still greater contempt do I regard the spirit which shrinks and cowers to own Christ as its Lord and Master;

and though I have no wish to appear vain, I still say, and that without the slightest fear of successful refutation, that Lutheranism was "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God—" born under circumstances nearly or quite as adverse to its existence as Christianity itself. From a humanly prospective standpoint, the odds were decidedly against it; yet it grew and flourished in the very face of opposition and wickedness in high places, until pulpit and pew both realized that the Master had declared "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

I would not be understood to say that ours is the only heaven-commissioned branch of the Church, but I simply claim for our own denomination what I am willing to concede to all others, subject to the Divine Spirit, that it is under the supervision of Heaven's King. Firmly holding that we have our commission from God, I now proceed to notice more directly "*how it may be accomplished.*"

The first thing I wish to notice as essential to this great work is :

*Consecration unto God.*

This has always been the first great requisite

to the successful accomplishment of the work assigned God's people. When under the Jewish dispensation Aaron and his sons were to be entrusted with the sacred duties of the priesthood, the command was given unto Moses, "Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office." And when Moses was about to ascend the mountain to receive the tables of the law, prior to his leaving the people, he charged Aaron to consecrate them unto the Lord. This would help to keep them in remembrance of the Divine goodness; and tend to produce a proper conviction of the relation they sustained unto God, and of his claims upon them. If they lived, they lived unto the Lord, and if they died, they died unto the Lord; whether they lived, therefore, or died, they were the Lord's. But from the account given by the sacred historian, it appears that for some unaccountable reason Aaron failed to execute this order, and, as a consequence, the people became impatient in looking for Moses, and fell into fearful idolatry. They were walking without light, and the consequence was they stumbled and fell.

That David regarded consecration to God as of prime importance, is argued in the appeal which he made to the people when he delivered his charge concerning the building of the Lord's house: "And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" It was not in the order of things to first build and then consecrate; but first let the service be consecrated, and then let the building be erected. Nor was there to be any delay in the work; it must be done that very day. From such illustrious examples we may learn that we are first to offer ourselves a sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service, and then look for His blessing upon our works. In perfect conformity with this was the teaching of Him who was at once the root and offspring of David. "Seek ye first," said He, "the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Nothing else—no, not even *all things else combined*—could be of such great value unto them; for even though a man should acquire the whole world, when brought into comparison with the crown of life, that be as the most worthless pebble by the

side of the most costly jewel. It would never aid him in the least to secure his soul's eternal peace, and his duties toward the human family would be wholly untouched.

In Christ dwelleth all fullness, but in us dwelleth no good thing. "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

It is of no consequence that a man has acquired the highest social position, or climbed to the topmost point of fame's pinnacle. Though he has acquired a position in the visible church, and his name is written by the side of Peter or Paul, yet this is of no real value. It may serve to tighten the shackles with which he is bound, and perfect the delusion that forbids a proper view of his desperate condition, and leave him a lifeless, powerless soul, but it could do nothing better. To be able to do the will of God, one must have the mind of God. He must be joined to Christ by the new and living way. Of this truth the sacred writers have left an abundance of proof, which the world-spirit has never yet been able to successfully gainsay. When the Apostle was yet unacquainted with this fact, he exclaimed, "Who

is sufficient for these things?" But when he had tested the reality of a walk with God, he declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." With such a friend it did not matter that the demand was great, the opposition formidable, and the foe powerful; Christ with him, and he was sure of conquest. So in the accomplishment of our mission we shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us; and in no other way.

Several things are implied in consecration to God which should be considered in the treatment of this subject. The first is an

*Abandonment of worldly-mindedness.*

There never was, neither will there ever be any concord between Christ and Belial, "For the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Such clear declarations forever settle the question of effecting a compromise between the two; and he who supposes that he has accomplished this is deceiving himself, and indicating that the truth is not in him. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," is as full of force for the Church of this generation as

of any other. The moral condition of things is such that the world, with all its fascinating charms and attractions, must be renounced before Christ will admit any one into the relation of a disciple. "Love not the world," wrote the apostle, "neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." In the face of such startling declarations, we can never hope to accomplish a heaven-conferred commission, while we are living in conformity with the world.

A second requisite to consecration is the *Possession of the Divine Spirit.*

Many references might here be given to support this position. Paul felt its need when he wrote to the Christians at Rome, "Except ye have the Spirit of Christ ye are none of His. And if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." At the very beginning of a Christian life, the influences of this Spirit are indispensable; no man can come

to Christ without it. Our Saviour taught Nicodemus that he could never enter heaven unless he was born of it; and Paul told the Church, no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Nor is there a step of progress made in the march to glory but by its influences. They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Had He not been with the disciples in the early history of the Church, Judaism would not have suffered her to live. No merely human institution could have withstood such dreadful odds for a single generation. With the promise of this our Lord cheered the hearts of His disciples when He revealed to them the sad intelligence of His departure, and with the fulfillment of the promise He made them mighty in the accomplishment of their mission on the day of Pentecost. Brethren, when our Church is controlled by the same Almighty influence we shall see the car move forward. There will then be a breaking in the enemies' ranks, and the crown designed by God for us will not be taken by another.

One thing more is implied in consecration unto God, which is essential to the accomplishment of our work :

*Due regard must be entertained for His Word, House and Ordinances.*

One of the great reasons that vital godliness was nearly extinct in the Jewish church at the coming of Christ, was that these things were too lightly esteemed. It was charged against them by One who perfectly understood all history, "Ye have made the commandments of God of none effect through your tradition," you "teach for doctrines the commandments of men." And if we of the nineteenth century follow the same paths, we shall arrive at the same goal. If, on the other hand—

We make the law of God,  
Our study and delight,  
Amidst the labors of the day,  
And watches of the night,

We then, like trees shall thrive,  
With waters near the root,  
Our doings prosper, every one,  
Our works yield heavenly fruit,

When we are so easily influenced by the demands of a pleasure seeking, pleasure loving world, it would be well for us, as Lutherans, to remember the counsel of him who said, "Unless I can be convinced by arguments drawn

from the Word of God, I cannot, I will not recant." It is a matter of the greatest folly, and wickedness too, to attempt to meet the requirements of the falsely so-called wise men of the age, who, "having itching ears," desire the minister to proclaim a new method of salvation, and God to create a new heaven, conformable to their own wondrously wise conceptions. Unto the pulpit God still gives the command, "Preach the preaching that I bid thee," and unto the pew, "Take heed how ye hear." Heeding these injunctions, we shall secure His favor. Growing careless thereof, we meet His displeasure.

Then of all the places on earth dear to our hearts, the house of the Lord should be dearest. I know that this is not in conformity with the so-called *advanced* customs and usages of our age; but some very good and successful servants of God in other days believed and taught the same doctrine. "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prefer not Jeru-

salem above my chief joy." No one ever yet entertained such high regard for God's house, who did not secure the blessing of the Almighty. We need a people who will dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their lives; who will give all due regard to all of His ordinances, simply because they are His, and not because they see, or fail to see, the reasonableness of them—men who, like Joshua, will declare, and live by the declaration—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Could but that spirit possess and rule our church, we should hear less, *far* less complaining; for the darkness would break, and the light and glory of God come upon us, filling us with joy and gladness.

As a second great requisite to the successful accomplishment of our mission, I notice

*Consecration to the work.*

Without this, it is absurd to even *look* for success. No enterprise, however laudable, ever was accomplished without it; while, on the other hand, many things which men have regarded as impossibilities have been secured by means of it. When the inspired writer gives an account of the second building of the walls

of Jerusalem, under circumstances so unfavorable that the enemies of the builder regarded the effort with derisive contempt, he accounts for the grand success which attended their labors by saying, "The people had a mind to work." Consecration to the work paid no regard to the formidable opposition, the scoffings of a wicked enemy, or the limited number engaged in the undertaking. Only two things seem to have met their vision: the first was the accomplishment of their mission; and the second the way God would be glorified therein. This same disposition pervaded the mind of Peter and John, when in the presence of the Jewish authorities, and in opposition to their most daring threats, they reply, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak those things which we have seen and heard." This spirit assisted the early Christians in bringing their possessions, or the price thereof, and laying them at the apostles' feet. Would to God that the present generation might be aided in making the sacrifice required by this same spirit!

Would that we might all be consecrated first

to God, and then to our work; for this would help us to "believe all things, endure all things, hope all things." It would open the coffers of the rich man to the relief of the poor man's sufferings. It would roll away the reproach that has ever been heaped upon the Church because of insincerity and cowardice. It would fill all our vacant pulpits and empty pews. It would bring all our unbaptized children to the baptismal font, and all the impenitent to the altar of confession and faith. It would suffer none of our sons and daughters to seek shelter in other folds for want of room in ours. But we should then find our table laden with a bounteous supply of heavenly viands, "and the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind," would hear our earnest appeal and seek the shelter of our fold. And we should be ready at the appearing of the Master to say, "I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do."

God help us to make the consecration.

## FIRST IN HONOR, FIRST IN SERVICE.

REV. O. D. S. MARCLEY, A. M.

[An extract from an address delivered at Selins-grove, during the Commencement of 1878.]

This address was founded upon the memorable words of Jesus, "Whosoever will be chiefest shall be servant of all." It was highly commended, and a copy was solicited for publication. It was befitting that something from our esteemed brother's pen should be seen in these memorial pages, and, by request, his respected widow placed the MS. at our disposal. Throughout the address is rich in thought, strong, and sometimes startling in expression.

He commenced with the statement that God means man to be all that he can be—that his aspirations cannot transcend his destination—that in his achievements he is limited only by his capacity and powers of endurance, and that he attains greatness himself by service which benefits others. In the illustration of his theme, he alluded to the artist, the poet, the musician, the astronomer, and he finally brings to view the preacher, and directs attention to

the "*pulpit and its services.*" And now we give his own words.

The apostle said, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. He did *not* say, an office of honor, nor of ease, but a good *work*. And I think experience bears me out in saying, it is the hardest kind of work. Let us get Paul's judgment from his own language, "For I think," said he, "that God hath set forth us, the apostles, last, as it were a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat."

O, the value of such a worker! What incalculable service! What a champion of the truth! What a defender of the faith! Thousands of generations will rise up and call him blessed. He brought skill, self-consecration and great earnestness to the cross; not the mannerisms of the schools and the wisdom of words, but the demonstration and power of the Spirit. Painstaking fitness only can qualify for valuable service here, as elsewhere.

There can be found no place where gospel work is not needed, where the most skilled worker is not required. The too oft repeated exclamation, amounting well nigh to a maxim—"Oh, he will do for some places"—involves a serious mistake. The more illiterate the people, the more difficult to bring them up to the true gospel standard. Ignorance is the first obstacle in the way of salvation, and shall I say the greatest hindrance in Christian work? There is no profession in which the same high qualifications are needed, or the same measure of skill and laboriousness is necessary, as in the Christian ministry. Those who anticipate honor, ease, pleasure in the sacred office, are sure to realize sorrowful disappointment. The very word *minister* signifies *servant*. And the service to be performed is of the hardest kind. The epaulette, the gay uniform, the imposing dress parade, doubtless attract not a few to military life. But they are very soon undeceived, and the pleasing delusion is swept away by the stern realities of war—the forced march, the bloody contest. The Christian ambassador is to endure hardness like a good soldier of the Cross, without fear, without com-

plaint. God has called him to the work. A terrible sense of duty is upon him. The love of Christ constrains him. His soul is sympathetically drawn out towards his fellow-men. He realizes that there is a woe hanging over him if he does not faithfully preach the gospel. And all these motives and influences are needed to prompt him to the rigid discipline, the self-denial, the life of servitude and privation to which he may be subjected.

I am not unmindful that God has ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, nor has that regulation been counteracted by any subsequent deliverance. Their abilities to preach are the fruits of their God-given endowments, developed and directed by tireless application in study and prayer. And while they thus impart to the people the richness of the gospel, it is but simple justice that their temporal necessities should be amply supplied by those to whom they minister. And yet who does not see that the liberality of the Church, other things being equal, must ever be proportionate with their estimate of the worth of the ministry. Hence the significance of Christ's language, "Whosoever will be great

among you, shall be your minister." The idea is, the ministry calls for the loftiest manhood, the richest intellectual, moral, spiritual attainments. As if the Saviour had said, "Let the noblest men, those of highest qualifications, be your ministers." The pulpit, as a means to an end, stands next to the Bible as an educator, as a reformer, as a leader to the nations. "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." But the "foolishness of preaching" happens to mean an elevation of wisdom which but few have acquired. Peter and Paul were preachers. Knox and Bunyan were preachers. Wesley and Whitefield were preachers. Martin Luther and Richard Baxter were preachers, and when the attention is turned to such men as ministers of Christ, no one can fail to see that the "foolishness of preaching," which secures salvation, means not a want of understanding, but the highest order of talent and the most practical type of wisdom. The Christian minister is the living agent under the Spirit of God, and of the sacred word in public worship. There he is pre-eminently a servant,

and the better the work, the more valuable the service. The more efficient the efforts of the preacher, the more signal the benefits of the hearer. From under the skillful workman, we separate from the house of God full of the help of pure motives; full of the inspiration of grand purposes, full of the joy of salvation, wiser and better, praising the ministry, and praising most Him who appointed it. Prof. Park, says the editor of "Massallon's Lent Sermons," regards it a prodigy that he finished a discourse in so short a time as ten or twelve days. This eminent preacher, it is said, sometimes re-wrote the same sermon fifteen and twenty times. A distinguished scholar of our own land re-wrote the most useful of his sermons thirteen or fourteen times, and in one instance is said to have labored, with the assistance of a literary friend, two whole days on as many sentences. A living divine, who has been called the prince of pulpit orators, spent a fortnight on a single discourse, which, it is claimed, has already accomplished more good than four thousand which were written by another of our pastors at the rate of two a week.

The choicest efforts and the best produc-

tions which the most cultured minds are capable of furnishing, alone are worthy of the dignity of the pulpit.

## THE MEMORIES OF OUR DEPARTED.

REV. M. KLING.

As time rapidly passes away, we are admonished "to remember the former days," in order that we may gather from them useful lessons, which may better fit us for the duties of the present day. It is a solemn and impressive, as well as a pleasant duty, to revive the memories of our "pious departed ones." A few of these had labored long and faithfully, amid trials and dangers peculiar to their time; and entered upon their eternal rest, long before we began to live. But as they left behind them, in our midst, a rich legacy of moral and religious influence, therefore, in a special sense, we regard them as *our departed*.

The town of Sharon, which formerly included the town of Seward, was originally called "New Dorlach," from Dorlach in Germany; and was first settled by the immediate descendants of those German emigrants who, in 1714, located in the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys.

In their religious preferences, most of them were followers of Martin Luther, the "Great Reformer" of the sixteenth century. At that early day, they were compelled to look for the ministrations of the gospel to the mother church of Schoharie; nor did they look in vain. As time and opportunity permitted, the pastor would wend his way from Old Schoharie along a bridle-path to this wild and thinly settled region, to break to these hungry Protestant Christians the bread of life.

The faithful shepherd, who was the *first* to sow the seed of gospel truth, from which, as also from the seed sowed by others who followed him, such glorious results have been realized in "New Dorlach," was the

#### REV. PETER NICHOLAS SOMERS.

We are informed that "he was a native of Germany, received ordination in London by a Lutheran ecclesiastical council, was called and ministered to the Lutheran congregation at Schoharie, during the French and Revolutionary wars, sharing the dangers and privations of those perilous times with his people, and comforting them with the consola-

tions and hopes of the gospel." Here he labored from about 1743 until 1783, as their regular pastor, and died in 1795 in the town of Sharon, in the family of his son. And from here, with his wife, after being buried sixty-five years, he was taken back to the old cemetery of Schoharie, the scene of his former labors, and over his grave a beautiful monument has been erected, expressive of appreciated worth.

Some time in the latter part of the last century, two Lutheran churches were organized in the present town of Seward, which were designated by the local names of, "the church of Dorlach," and, "the church of Rhinebeck." I am not prepared to say whether the Rev. P. N. Somers organized these societies while he occasionally came among them to preach the gospel, or some one else. But the first settled pastor, as far as we have been enabled to learn, was the

#### REV. HENRY MOELLER.

This servant of Christ before that time had labored in Albany, and in the early part of the present century took charge of the above-named churches, living in the parsonage near the Rhinebeck church. Here he labored until

about the year 1822, when he retired from the ministry, and after living with his son, Dr. John C. Moeller, in the present town of Sharon, some eight or nine years, departed this life and entered upon his eternal reward.

It is said that he was a good scholar, a sound theologian, and an acceptable preacher. And to this is added that he possessed a very amiable disposition. With these combined qualifications, we wonder not that he labored so long and closed up his earthly career among the people of his former charge. His place in the ministry and last charge were soon filled by a son of one of his members, born and reared in the congregation, the

#### REV. ADAM CROWNSE.

Here, in the vigor and strength of youthful manhood, he commenced his labors about the year 1822, and served the congregations for the space of about four years, after which he received and accepted a call from the Lutheran church of Guilderland, Albany county. Here he soon located, and with the exception of a few years that he served the churches of Middleburgh and Breakabeen, he spent the remain-

der of his ministerial life among this people. And here he died and entered upon his eternal rest in heaven about the year 1865.

We feel to venerate and cherish the record of those early fathers in the ministry for what they have done for us in the township of our birth—for we should not lose sight of the fact that they lived and labored during a period of national trials and embarrassments. The wars of the Revolution and of 1812 cast their blighting influence over the land, and not only financially, but spiritually, the churches suffered *much*, which was felt during the succeeding years. And it is but fair, in looking back over those years of darkness and spiritual dearth, to presume that, faithfully as they labored, they saw and deeply felt that the state of religion fell far short of what they ardently desired.

But we find that those days of adversity were about passing away; a great and glorious reaction was soon to follow. The evils of war had well nigh spent their strength, and the public mind, filled to surfeiting with the demoralizing offerings of earth, began to look and long for the substantial treasures of the gospel. The Great Head of the Church, who

overrules all circumstances and events for the spiritual welfare of Zion, had some faithful praying ones left; and in answer to prayer He was opening the way, and was soon to furnish the efficient instrumentality to effect His own glorious purposes. After a vacancy of some considerable time, the Lutheran churches of the Sharon charge invited the

#### REV. P. WIETING.

Of Lowville, Lewis county, N. Y., who, in the vigor of youthful manhood, was then laboring in that region as a home missionary, to visit and preach for them, with a view, if satisfactory, to settle him as their pastor. He came among them and preached his trial sermon on the first Sabbath in September, 1828; and, as these services gave general satisfaction, he received a call, and entered upon his labors among them on the first of November following. The relation then and there formed extended over the long period of forty years.

Aside from his former missionary labors, *this* was his *first* and *only* charge. In looking over the history of those memorable years, and the great and happy results that followed

his labors, none can doubt that God had prepared the way and selected the man, to bring about His own wonderful purposes in this part of His moral vineyard.

While the writer was born and reared within the bounds of his charge, and first heard the preached gospel from his lips, yet still he has no distinct recollection of the religious movements in these churches, until the sweeping revival of 1832. But as he was my pastor, and I sat under his ministry for many years, besides being a ministerial member of the same synod with him for eighteen years, I can speak with confidence of what I do know, and testify of what I have seen, of his life and labors.

His preaching was evangelical, plain, pointed, and eminently practical. It was clearly seen and impressively felt, that his sole object in the pulpit was the conversion of sinners and the spiritual advancement of believers. In all his ministrations he seemed to lose sight of self, and to hide behind the Master. He honored Christ by holding him up constantly as the only hope of a lost world, and Christ honored him by giving him multitudes of souls as seals to his ministry. Many preceded and many

have followed him to the better land since his departure, and some are still lingering on the shores of time, whom in the great day he will recognize as his spiritual children begotten in the gospel. As a pastor, he exerted an almost unbounded influence over his people. Few ever exceeded him in pastoral labor, or were better acquainted with the spiritual condition and financial standing of every family of a charge. As a keen observer of human nature, and a man of remarkably good sense and judgment, he was enabled to handle each member with consummate skill, and all were generally controlled by his counsel and advice. But his personal labors on earth finally closed; he had filled up the measure of his days in great usefulness, and the Lord now called him home to rest in heaven, on the seventh day of September, 1869.

It is pleasing to know that, "though dead he still speaketh," for the works he wrought on earth follow him, and the influence he left behind will live and be felt during succeeding generations: All who knew him well, and especially those who sat under his ministry, will sacredly cherish his memory, as a fearless

preacher and a faithful, devoted pastor. The place where his body rests will be visited by his surviving spiritual children, with tender, mournful feelings, as often as opportunity is afforded, to scatter flowers upon his grave, as tokens of filial love.

Brother Wieting having resigned his charge in the fall of 1868, the succeeding June Rev. P. H. Turner received license from the Franckean Synod, and took charge of the church of Gardnersville. We believe he was a member of the Lutheran church of Ancram, Columbia county, N. Y. He was regarded as a decidedly good man, an excellent pastor and an acceptable preacher; and his labors were soon attended with quite an extensive religious awakening, which resulted in a large ingathering into his church. But while the affections of both pastor and people were becoming mutually fervent and strong, and the outlook in the future seemed cheerful and promising, alas! suddenly and most unexpectedly he was called away by death, while on a visit to Columbia county, on the tenth day of September, 1871, and there he was buried. That he was beloved by the members of the Gardnersville church, is very

evident; since after a lapse of ten years, they still fondly refer to him in language and expressions indicative of deep sorrow of heart. But we feel a sense of relief in the fact, that thus far, he is the last of the pastors of this charge whose death we have been called upon to record. Others have since faithfully and successfully labored in this field, but they are still spared to the church, to fulfill their high destiny in the Lord's vineyard. And now we turn with mournful interest to other of our departed ones, who had both their natural and spiritual births within the bounds of the pastoral district of Sharon and New Rhinebeck. Quite a goodly number of men were furnished by these churches for the gospel ministry, who went out into different sections of the land, and preached the glad tidings of salvation. Most of these are still in the field, but some have died and gone to their reward on high. And the first of these in the order of time, we think, was the

REV. JOHN ROSENBERG,

Who in the glow of youth and ardent piety, after pursuing a proper course of study, en-

tered the ministry about the year 1841, and after laboring a few years in Pennsylvania, in the midst of his usefulness, fell a victim to death while yet in the very morning of his life.

We now turn our attention to our lamented brother, the

#### REV. DAVID OTTMAN.

He was born within the bounds of Rhinebeck church, near the close of the last century; and before brother Wieting entered upon his charge in Sharon in 1828, brother Ottman was married, and with his family lived on the farm now owned by Peter Bellinger, one mile west of Sharon Hill. We are informed that he was one of the first fruits of brother Wieting's labors in this large field. He was a man of more than ordinary ability. In stirring power and unction, very few exceeded him in prayer. He possessed a keen analytical mind; and with the limited advantages that were afforded him in the days of his youth, it was a matter of surprise to many, how that in the midst of a large family, and in the cultivation of a large farm, he by his own individual effort acquired

such a general store of knowledge. In the Scriptures he manifested great familiarity, and in theology he was as clear and systematic as some of our best theologians. Under the urgent necessities of the churches, it is not strange that he was urged by some of his best friends, as well as by a sense of duty, to give at least a part of his time to the work of the ministry. Though he pursued through life his early occupation, yet having been licensed, he commenced his labors and served the Lutheran church at Freysbush, for a length of time. In 1841 he organized the church at Centre Valley, and labored among them for about two years with acceptance and great success. He finally settled in Walworth county, Wisconsin, where in September, 1845, he organized the Lutheran church of Sharon. The early members of this church were principally old acquaintances and members of the churches in Schoharie and Montgomery counties, New York. A few years after this, he very unexpectedly was called away to his rest in heaven, after having passed the meridian of life.

We next call to mind our highly respected brother, the

## REV. WILLIAM OTTMAN.

He was born in the town of Seward, perhaps about the year 1809 or 1810, and was a member of the Rhinebeck church. The record shows that he entered the ministry as early as 1831. His first charge was the church of Clay, in 1832, which he served three years, and then took charge of the church of Freybush, which he served three years, and then returned again to Clay in 1839. While we have no definite record at hand, our impression is that he labored here at least twenty years more. Here he was married, here the most of his children were born, and here his sainted wife died.

The last charge he served was the church of Black Lake, where he entered upon his labors in 1862, and here he departed this life in 1870, to enter upon his eternal reward in heaven. Brother Ottman performed a good work in the ministry, and seemingly he died without leaving an enemy in the world.

The last one we are called upon to remember in this connection, is our deeply-lamented brother, the

## REV. O. D. S. MARCLEY.

He was born in the town of Seward, about the year 1842, and early in life became the subject of saving grace, and united with the Lutheran church of Gardnersville. Being impressed with the duty of serving the Lord in the ministry, he soon entered upon and completed a full course of study. In the year 1867, after sustaining an excellent examination, he was licensed to preach the gospel, and soon after entered the active work of the ministry in the church of Freysbush. After laboring here some three years with success and satisfaction to the people, he received and accepted a call from the churches of Orleans district. In this large field he labored faithfully and successfully for the space, I think, of about five years. Resigning his charge here, he settled in Pennsylvania, and took charge of the church of Ashland, where he labored perhaps some three years more. He then was induced to resign his charge at Ashland, and accept a call from a prominent Lutheran church in Bloomsburg, in the same state. Here he was located, and having labored long enough among them to become well acquainted with the people and the real

wants of the church, and just when the prospects looked promising of realizing a rich harvest from his well-laid plans and operations, he was suddenly removed by death from the church on earth to the church in heaven, at the early age of about thirty-eight years. Those who knew him best are prepared to say that he possessed amiable traits of character. His friendship was ardent, trustworthy, and abiding. And while he had a great interest in the Lutheran church everywhere, he always manifested a special attachment for that church and those ministerial brethren, among whom he commenced his Christian life and labors.

As already intimated, brother Marcley was a young man of splendid abilities, and was rapidly rising and fairly on the way of becoming one of the most efficient ministers in our church. But the Great Head of the Church saw fit to call him away in the midst of a promising life, and we bow in humble submission to His will.

And now while we close up the list of those of our departed that went out of these churches, to serve the Lord in the ministry,

"not be unmindful of others, who as *lay*

members so faithfully served Christ. Very many in this connection might be mentioned with pleasure, but time and space will permit us to notice only a few of the most prominent ones.

And the first of these, in our esteem and veneration, is the sainted

#### JOHN EMPIE.

In some respects he was a remarkable man; and divine grace made him just what he was, a burning, shining light in the world and a power in the church.

As early as 1808, being then about thirty-three years of age, after a long and fearful struggle, he found Christ precious to his soul. At that period, as related by him, spiritual darkness hung over the churches, and experimental piety was unthought of by the many and professed by very few. Hence in his troubled state of mind, he hardly knew the nature of his anxieties, whom to consult, or where to find relief. But the Lord by His spirit was surely leading him in the way he knew not of, and finally brought him into the light and liberty of the gospel of Christ. He

was remarkable for his unwavering, undeviating perseverance in the course of piety from that time till the day of his death. With him religion was a living, controlling principle, to be carried out in all the activities and relations of life. That responsibility he accepted, and in a remarkable degree carried out, without turning to the right or the left. He was remarkable for the controlling and lasting influence he exerted over others; probably no other lay member in the church excelled him in this respect. He had this power with men because he had power with God, and lived pre-eminently a holy life.

Twenty years after his conversion, at the time brother Weiting became his pastor, he found him one of the few praying souls in the church. He labored and prayed until he saw multitudes around him converted and gathered into the church; and when he died, he not only saw his own children, but nearly all his children's children, members of the flock of Christ. Though he passed away from earth some eighteen years ago, to reap the rewards of heaven, his influence on earth remains, and will continue through future generations.

Another of the older members of the church, whose name is held in grateful remembrance for his Christian fidelity and piety even in those early days of spiritual dearth, is

DR. JOHN C. MOELLER,

son of Rev. Henry Moeller. While he was a physician of extensive practice in the towns of Sharon and Seward, he was also an influential member of the Lutheran church, and by his prayers and personal labors among the people, was largely instrumental in bringing about in later years a religious revival in the churches of the Sharon charge. He was one of the few praying members that brother Wieting found in 1828, when he commenced his labors in this field; and in those great revivals that followed a few years after, Dr. Moeller greatly aided his Pastor by his hearty sympathy, co-operation, and prayers. He was qualified both to treat for the diseases of the body, and to counsel and pray for those who were anxious about their souls' salvation. The last act of his life, after the close of a day's labor in his profession, was to gather around him his family to lead them in family worship. That very night

he was stricken down with apoplexy, and breathed his last before the light of another day. This occurred in May, 1849. His life, like Jacob's of old, closed in the midst of his family, while invoking the blessings of God to rest upon them.

In reviewing the past, the name of our venerable father in the Church,

#### WILLIAM OTTMAN,

claims at least a passing thought. He was the oldest of all the members with whom the writer had an intimate acquaintance. He was born in the year 1766; and at the early age of fourteen, in the Revolutionary War, was taken prisoner and carried to Canada. After a few years he was permitted to return home, and some time after he became a member of the Rhinebeck church, when we are not able to say. Still we know that he professed saving grace, as he once related his Christian experience to me, and he was that *one* praying member, often spoken of, that brother Wieting found in the Rhinebeck church when he took charge of it. He passed away from earth some twenty-seven years ago, to reap the reward of the righteous.

Another brother in Christ, the mention of whose name awakens hallowed feelings in the hearts of all who knew him well, is

#### HENRY SOMERS.

At what time of life he experienced religion and united with the Rhinebeck church, we are unable to say; but as long as we have any recollection, he was a devout, praying man. Of all the lay members of the church, none exceeded him in the gift of prayer. In the eloquence, fervency, and power of prayer, he was truly wonderful, and in this respect very few either ministerial or lay brethren equaled him. At his house, in a crowded social prayer-meeting, we once heard him pray and continue to pray until some five or six anxious souls were born into the kingdom of Christ.

For a few years before his death he was gradually wasting away with consumption; but as long as he could move about, he would meet his brethren in the prayer circle. And the last time he attended such a meeting from home is well remembered and often spoken of by those who were present. He came some two miles to the house of Father Empie, where

prayer-meetings were wont to be held, and as he said, to meet his *dear* brethren for the last time in the prayer circle. Though very feeble in body and hoarse in voice, his prayer and exhortation on that occasion will never be forgotten. He spoke as a dying man, exhorting his brethren to hold on and persevere in their Christian course, and admonishing the impenitent to seek an interest in Christ. The mode and manner of his exercises it would be in vain to attempt to describe, but the effects were clearly seen and deeply felt; it was just such a scene as will never be forgotten. And his prediction proved but too true; after this they saw his face no more in that prayer circle—his work in the church on earth was about done, and the Master soon after this called him home to the church triumphant, to share the reward of the righteous.

Though thirty-seven years have rolled away since his departure, his memory still remains green and flourishing in many hearts; and while we think of the sainted ones above, his name is always associated with that happy throng.

In a most striking manner the saving power of divine grace was manifested in the person of

## DAVID MERENES.

This is another of our departed ones, whose Christian fidelity and most devoted life proved a great blessing to the church of his choice. He was a man of strong intellectual powers, and of an ardent temperament. In his earlier life he was much engaged in the pleasures and hilarities of the world, and in consequence became irregular in his habits, very skeptical in his religious views, and a strong opposer to vital religion. To reach and control such a person by the saving influences of the gospel, seemed to be almost a hopeless case. It is well remembered that in the first great revival at Sharon in 1832, he *openly* opposed the work by strongly arguing the doctrine of Universalism. But the great and important change in his life occurred in a religious revival in the same church, the following year. With a man of such strong mind and fixed convictions, as well as confirmed habits, nothing but the power of Divine grace could correct his religious views, cause him to renounce his wayward course, and embrace Christ as the only Saviour of his soul. And yet, judging from his subsequent life, all this was effected in his case. As far as

we, then in our youthful days, were able to judge, we never witnessed a more complete consecration of body, soul and spirit, to the service of the Lord. He never was known, in the least, to flag in his religious zeal, from the time of his conversion until the day of his death. He was radical in his views in regard to the moral and religious enterprises of the age; and Puritanic in his religious life and sense of duty. In thus carrying out his convictions without fear or favor, he proved a terror to evil doers, but a great motive power in stimulating the church to walk in the path of Christian duty. His religious career, though short, was a faithful and successful one; very few in so short a period left a deeper and more abiding influence behind. In the Fall of 1840, seven years after his conversion, and just after he had enjoyed another blessed revival in the Sharon church, of which he was a member, he was taken sick, and in a short time departed this life to enter upon his eternal reward. His dying message to his Pastor was: "Tell brother Wieting that I die in the same faith in which I lived."

## JOHN C. SHUTTS.

The above named person was a most worthy member of the church, and a brother of rare Christian traits of character. He became a subject of Divine grace in the earlier years of brother Weting's ministry in this district, and became a member of the Rhinebeck church. He possessed an amiable disposition, a sound judgment, and always responded to every claim and requirement of the church with a conscientious regard. His fine sense of right and of Christian obligation ever prompted him to contribute of his money as cheerfully and repeatedly, for the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad, as he performed any other Christian duty.

His religion controlled him in every act of his life; and so perfectly was that life in sweet accord with the spirit and teachings of the gospel, that the most impious would speak of him as a model Christian man. Being so amiable in disposition, so correct in his Christian life, and so perfectly honorable in all his dealings, he was esteemed *by all*, and when he passed away all classes lamented his death. He died in 1865, aged 62 years.

## SEBASTIAN SHANK.

This brother was one of those few Christians who professed experimental religion in those earlier times, when such a thing in this region seemed to be generally unknown. Some time before brother Wieting entered upon his work in Sharon and Rhinebeck, brother Shank was known to be a devout, praying man, and in his sphere labored earnestly to bring about a better spiritual state in the Lutheran church at Cobleskill, of which he was a member ; but his well-meant efforts not being encouraged, but in a measure opposed, he finally dissolved his connection here, and united with the Rhinebeck church. He was at all times very much engaged in religion ; and no subject lay so near his heart as the cause of Christ ; and no name would awaken such tender emotions as the name of Jesus. In every sense he was a good man and a ripe Christian ; and when he passed away, the church lost one of its brightest lights. But we have reason to be grateful that he was spared to the church so long a time, as he did not go down to his grave until about eighty-six years of age. Though we shall see his face no more on earth,

he has left a holy influence behind as a legacy to the church.

### JOHN I. EMPIE,

a son of the sainted John Empie, was one of the first fruits of brother Weiting's labors in the Sharon charge; and was one of the pastor's most steadfast friends and safest counsellors in all that pertained to the interest of the church. He was a brother of more than ordinary intellectual capacity—always true to his Christian profession, and to the end of his days was an honor to the church and a blessing to the world. The Lord had entrusted him with many talents, and so faithfully did he improve them that he gained a long continued advancement in the Divine life. He was another one of those brethren that possessed a wonderful gift in prayer, in the exercise of which it was clearly seen and felt that he attended to it invariably every day of his life. Perhaps at no period in the history of the church was his wise counsel and active co-operation more needed than at the time of his death. But the Lord, in His inscrutable providence, removed him suddenly from the pains and toils of earth to his eternal

rest in heaven ; and while the church most keenly feels her loss, the consoling thought remains that their loss is his eternal gain. He died some three or four years ago, aged about seventy years.

#### PETER S. CROSS.

This dear brother became a subject of saving grace, and united with the Rhinebeck church, I believe about the year 1832. The social feeling was one of the prominent characteristics of his nature, and hence he was extremely fond of society. By this means he formed an extensive acquaintance, and his name far and wide became as familiar as household words. But in all the relations of life, he was ready to bear testimony to the reality of saving grace, and vindicate the cause of Christ. He was warmly attached to the church of his choice, and was one of the greatest admirers and most devoted friends of brother Wieting that I ever knew. We believe he faithfully strove to live a Christian life, and as he passed through a lingering sickness and neared the borders of death, he manifested the calm fortitude and resignation of a disciplined Christian. His pathway be-

came brighter and brighter still, until he stepped from the shores of time to try the realities of eternity. Upwards of forty years did he serve his Master, and died at about the age of sixty-nine years. His dying testimony was, "The religion which I professed in life is my comfort now, and will sustain me in the hour of death."

#### CHRISTIAN OTTMAN.

The above-named brother was the oldest son of the venerable William Ottman; and from his youth was known to be very industrious, possessing great business tact. With him it seemed to be a constitutional trait to prosecute any and every piece of work with all his might, and for this reason he might by many be regarded as extremely worldly and grasping in his feelings; but we are sure that he was far from being avaricious, and possessed a generous, benevolent heart. In the first great revival that occurred in Sharon, he promptly yielded to the claims of the gospel, and gave his heart to God. He was a member of the Rhinebeck church, and readily assumed all the responsibilities, and discharged every duty that

pertains to the Christian life. In 1837, he located within the bounds of the Sharon church, with which he united and remained a faithful member the remainder of his life. He by great industry as a stirring business man had accumulated considerable property; and a portion of this was freely given from time to time for the support of the church and the cause of Christ abroad. Busy and stirring as he ever was, he always found time to attend to the wants of the church, and promptly to attend to the stated means of grace. He was a good, praying man, and when he died the church lost one of its main supporters. He left us some twelve years ago, to enjoy his eternal rest above.

#### PETER HAYNES.

This dear brother was one of those faithful praying members of the Sharon church, whose memory will remain enshrined in the heart of all those that were associated with him in church fellowship. His every-day life, as well as the deep interest he ever manifested for the spiritual prosperity of the church, exhibited the beautiful model of a true Christian man. Not only was he prompt and regular in at-

tending to the means of grace in the Lord's house on the Sabbath; but he would often travel miles on foot to meet his brethren in the prayer-meeting. Those precious seasons are well remembered still by some of us that were accustomed to meet with him on such occasions. Many of his elder brethren preceded him to the better land, and some are lingering still on the shores of time.

His work on earth closed some eight or nine years ago, and by the bidding of his Divine Master whom he served so well, he has gone to his final home in heaven to reap the reward of the faithful.

#### JAMES SWARTHOUT, ESQ.

In this connection the above-named brother claims an honorable notice as one of our dear departed ones. He experienced religion and united with the Rhinebeck church some time during the earlier labors and great religious revivals in brother Wieting's churches. After this his greatest delight ever was to mingle with professed Christians—to hold converse with them upon religious subjects, and at all times to attend to all the ordinances of the

church. He was one of the most active and efficient members in the prayer-meeting, and at times of religious revivals, we ever knew. The Master had blessed him with great fluency of speech, and in the exercise of prayer and singing he was exceedingly interesting. He was pre-eminently social and benevolent in his feelings—his society was very agreeable, and sought after by both old and young—and hence, perhaps, no other member in the church had formed such an intimate and extensive acquaintance.

He held with credit the civil office of Justice in his town for many years, and after serving the Lord for at least forty-five years, he was called away by death within the past year, to enjoy his eternal rest in heaven.

#### AUGUSTUS MOELLER.

This much-respected brother was a son of Dr. John C. Moeller, and became a subject of saving grace in 1840, during a religious revival in the Sharon church, of which he became a member some time after. Those who knew him best will bear cheerful testimony to his unflagging zeal and devotion to the cause of

Christ. While health and opportunity permitted, he was always found actively engaged in the prayer circle, the Sabbath-school, the choir, and all the ordinances of God's house. He was, in the best sense of the term, a devout Christian man. His religious influence for good was felt in his own family, in the church and community at large. He suffered with a lingering disease for some length of time, but his faith and hope in Christ remained strong and undisturbed to the last. Having served Christ faithfully for about thirty-six years, when the hour of his departure came, his life went out as gently as the fading light of the closing day.

In addition to the above-named brethren, whose lives and labors we have briefly and imperfectly sketched, if time and space permitted, many others might be named, whose memory is enshrined in our hearts. We call up with mournful interest such dear brethren as George F. Dunkell, Philip Becker, William Engles, Peter Stall and Jonas Paxter, who were members of the Sharon and Rhinebeck churches—and likewise Benjamin Lehman, who formerly was a member of the Rhinebeck church,

but in 1839 entered into the organization of the Lutheran church at Argusville, where the writer was his pastor for about nineteen years. Of the large membership of that church, we regarded him as one of our best and tried friends, and with a sense of gratitude his many favors and fatherly counsels are still remembered.

And now, as brought to our attention in the preparation of these brief notices, we bid adieu again to the above-named brethren who have preceded us to the spirit world, with the fervent prayer and fond hope that God in His great goodness may grant his sustaining grace to all of us still lingering here, and that when we pass away we may meet all these dear departed ones in the better land where separation is unknown.

### HUMILITY.

REV. S. W. YOUNG.

It is said that Sir Eardly Wilmot once called his son, a lad of seventeen years, to his side, and said to him: "I will tell you a secret worth knowing. My elevation, especially my last promotion, is not due to my superior abilities,

nor to any particular merit of mine ; I owe it to my humility. I have never attempted to place myself above others, and have always endeavored to maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man." This was an exemplification of the true philosophy of life. The valley of humiliation is man's appropriate position. We learn this from Him who was exalted above our highest conceptions. He emptied Himself of the divine glory, became man, and took upon Him the form of a servant. The wisdom which " puffeth up" may at times secure an advantage of even the lowly spirit, and excite aspirations which carry a man above and beyond the sphere for which he is fitted by his abilities. When one drifts into responsibilities transcending his qualifications, all his movements make him miserable and all his tendencies are downward. " Before honor is humility." The loftiest pinnacle must be contemplated in the lowest vale. Superiority is attained by " regarding others better than ourselves." St. Augustine says, " Should any one ask me concerning the Christian religion, what it is, and what are the characteristics of the people who embrace it,

I would answer that the first, second and third things therein—that all things are—humility.” The Archbishop of Mentz was a remarkable example of this Christ-like virtue. He was the son of a wheelwright, and lest in his exaltation, he should forget or disdain his humble origin, he hung wheels and the tools of the craft about his bed-chamber, and wrote under them in capital letters, “Wellegis, Wellegis, remember thy original!” Gregory the great was born of noble parents; yet he had so little respect for this hereditary honor, that he often said, and sometimes with tears in his eyes, “All glory is miserable if he on whom it rests does not seek after the glory of God.”

Humility is one of the most prominent and one of the most beautiful characteristics of the true Christian. It is the first lesson he learns in the school of Christ. He does not “think more highly of himself than he ought to think;” but his estimate of himself is “sober, modest, truthful, as God has granted him the ‘measure of grace.’” He is content with his allotment. If he is reviled, he is ready with the philosopher to say, “Had he who reviled me known me better, he would have said

worse things about me." Though he yet he is "gentle and easy to be entreated." He bends before the storm like the reed which recovers his uprightness when the tempest is over, unlike the sturdy oak, which does not stand when the tempest yet falls before it.

Saul of Tarsus was fully plumed with Isaical righteousness. Before the conversion came he was inflated with self-conceit. How high he stood in his own estimation! "Touching the law, I was blameless; what a contrast, when sins were revived and 'O wretched man that I am!' He fell from his exaltation to the deepest self-abasement. He became a fool that he might be wise. In humbling himself under the mighty hand of God, he was exalted in due time. The fruits of humility are not fully to be realized in the present state. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Whatever our attainments here, we shall scarcely be able to read the first page of that endless volume, the full scope of which will be unfolded to us there. "Now we see through a glass darkly," though we see "face to face." The blessed apostle says, "whom having not seen we love," we

the heavenly sphere see as He is; and best of all, "we shall be like Him."

And yet humility makes us firm. Resting upon no ambiguous foundation, it never recedes from the true positions which have been taken, never turns aside from the path of rectitude. The great founder of the Lutheran Church was a good example of decision of character, combined with true humility. In mind and heart he was not to be shaken by his adversaries. Fear of consequences never caused him to swerve from the claims of duty. He suffered many privations and many persecutions. He had many opportunities to command the applause of fame, many strong temptations to think more highly than he did think of himself. But he was as unyielding against flattery as he was against opposition. And to-day on both sides of the waters there is no name more revered, none thought to be more fully identified with "the Name which is above every name," than that of Martin Luther.

Humility begets contentment. The humble man is satisfied with the allotments God has given him. He has learned from the book of true wisdom that happiness, that life, does not

consist in the abundance of the good things o  
this world which a man may possess. He  
turns away from the fascinations to which the  
index finger of pride and ambition points, and  
is more than satisfied with the good conscience  
which he enjoys in walking humbly with his  
God. His course through life is safe and  
peaceful, his hopes for the future are blessed  
and glorious.

What a contrast between humility and pride! Humility takes the lowest seat, and condescends to mingle with those of low degree. Pride has a high look and a lofty aim, and chases at everything more elevated. Humility rambles through verdant vales, along rippling streams, and breathes the odors of the flower which bloom upon their banks. Pride blindly clammers for the mountain top, over dangerous cliffs, and finds itself at last where all is bare and bleak. Humility seeks the sylvan retreat of nature, and feels secure. Pride is tortured with vain desires which end in sorrowful disappointment. Humility seeks and is satisfied with the favor of God. Pride sacrifices every thing for the applause of men. Humility ends in honor, glory, immortality, eternal life. Prid

goes out in shame and everlasting contempt. Let the language of the Great Teacher complete the description. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, but he that exalteth himself shall be abased."

### THE POSSIBILITIES AND PROBABILITIES OF THE FUTURE.

REV. N. VAN ALSTINE.

Some persons are chiefly imaginative: in a state of frenzied reverie they contemplate the future, and without safe premises in their reasoning they are wild in their conclusions. Such are born and educated fanatics; they are unsafe as instructors and guides in science and in theology. Others are diligent and logical students in every field of natural and moral philosophy; they discover and comprehend the developments of providence and historical verities; in the events of the past they read the possibilities of the future, for history repeats itself. True, the unfoldings of the future may be more perfect than they were in the past; yet the germs of events are seen to excite the hope for full maturity and perfection in no distant future. This view of the

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condition of the past and the future will place us on the standpoint where we may contemplate and study the possibilities and probabilities of coming events. God alone fully knows the possibilities of the future, for He comprehends the *contingent* as well as the *absolute*; while our knowledge is quite imperfect, and limited largely by conjecture and superficiality; in the womb of the future are influences and laws to modify and shape developments of events altogether different from our cherished anticipations.

We will look, for a few moments, at the possibilities of natural science. Science selects and groups together congenial truths or facts into a theory, and then by thorough investigation we become acquainted with them as a system. Therefore we speak of the science of astronomy, geology, chemistry, music. From time immemorial, philosophical students have directed their attention and research into the starry heavens; by the help of instruments they were enabled more thoroughly to investigate and understand the distances, size, and regularity of the rolling orbs in the immensity of space. In view of the past, the improvements

made and increase of knowledge, who dares to predict that it is not possible to make new discoveries, and become more intimately acquainted with the science of astronomy? In view of the inventive genius of man and his unremitting application to study, there is quite a certainty of the possibility and probability that the starry firmament will be more thoroughly explored, the laws of suns and planetary systems be better known and more fully understood. We dare put no limit to success in investigation and probabilities of future development. So it will be with the science of chemistry. Nature and the materials of earth will be subjected to a more thorough analysis, and new combinations, which will produce new substances. These experiments will disclose wonderful mysteries in nature. What now may appear perfect and defy further improvement, will then seem superficial and incipient, and open up a vast scope for future possibilities. This increasing knowledge in chemistry and geology, and in all sciences, will encourage untiring research and effort to realize the probabilities of the future. Thus we shall understand more of the philosophy and mysteries

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of nature as we move onward in the progress of our endless existence. We can not assign any cogent reasons why study and progressive knowledge will cease beyond the boundary of time; there, doubtless, they will have a fuller and more unobstructed scope.

If in former ages the knowledge of truth and facts was quite imperfect and comparatively unproductive, and the sciences rested in obscurity; how much more was this the condition of the arts! When the sciences were mere theories—abstract principles—the arts of the present day had no existence; for these depend on practice—knowledge reduced to performance. This is the reason why the sciences and arts are wedded together, just as theory and practice are united as cause and effect. The science of medicine precedes the art of practice; the theory of music, the art of execution; or the art of sculpture and of painting. Genius produced arts, carried them to higher perfection and utility, and now they shine in brilliancy, and promise great usefulness to society and the world. The sculptor in his study conceives the ideal in his mind and imagination, and with his mallet and chisel brings forth

from the cold and rough block of marble the form and features of the living being. The painter puts upon the canvass with pencil and brush the portrait, the variegated landscape, the whirling clouds in a thunder-storm, the wintry blast, the effulgent sunshine, the coming spring with bud and flower. As we gaze upon and study the painter's workmanship on the canvass, we have sentiments of admiration, joy, ecstasy. With these facts before us, the evidences of increasing perfection from the past, that progressive genius has executed, we have a right to anticipate greater perfection in the future. Experience in the past and the knowledge of increasing skill from age to age give assurance that there is room for higher attainments in science and art. As history repeats itself, there are unequivocal indications of progress and greater perfection.

When water and electricity are brought into conjunction with suitable machinery and utilized, how wonderful and vast are the results! In ages past, water was employed for certain purposes of usefulness; but how imperfect and within what narrow limits!—for the world was ignorant of the art to generate steam and utilize

its mighty force in application to machinery; no steamboat to plow our rivers, lakes, and ocean with the commerce of the world; or to drive with speed a train of railroad cars across the continent; or to move machinery so forcibly as to drive a thousand spindles and looms, iron-foundries, and machine-shops. These are scientific facts, that no river, lake, or ocean can hinder; no rocky mountain and deep gorges are insuperable obstructions against them; they either pass across, surmount, or perforate them. Electricity flashes along the wire, carries thoughts, feelings, purposes, and gives them embodiment in words into all parts of the world—so rapidly it carries news, that in one night pages of thought are read in every nationality, of the civilized world; rivers, mountains, and oceans, form no barrier. Soon electricity will be harnessed by the ingenuity and persistence of man, to engirdle the world and make it obedient to his behests. The telephone annihilates space, and practically brings distant localities into one neighborhood, organized into a social circle for mutual entertainment and congratulation. There was a time when such ideals were not born in the wildest

imagination of man; but now they are undeniable realities. Who dare now prescribe a limitation to greater perfection in the future? What barrier within the realm of science and art shall interpose and close up all further progress? What are the possibilities and probabilities of the future in science, in water, steam, and electricity? The muscles of the heart send the life-currents into the extremities of the body, to give health, strength, activity in every part; so all nature holds connection from centre to circumference, exerts a union of forces and mutual reactions.

We cannot fail to see a large field for thought and study in the rise and progress of civilization and human government. In the land and age of darkness and gloom and barbarism, the people could hardly discern the twilight of civilization, so faint and tardy came forth the rising sun above the misty horizon; yet in the process of time it was known as a reality. Now the power, influence, and light of civilization are wide-spread, constantly augmenting its transforming and refining power. Some nations enjoy the glory of the full orb of civilization, and exult in its fruition; but others are

now being ushered into refreshing light and freedom. Civilization and free governments are realities, and are pushing forward into wider and more permanent victories. The grip of usurpation and despotism is being paralyzed; oppressions are convulsed and thrown off as intolerable burdens; cruelty is detested and anathematized by the people; all claim *natural rights* as the only basis of a just civil government. They demand freedom and protection, and resent the condition of serfdom; yield obedience by consent of the governed and not by the iron rule of the autocrat. What progress do we behold in this direction for the last century! In reading the history of the world in the past, dare we not anticipate marvelous and radical changes in civil governments—the possession by the people of greater freedom, the concession in all lands of their natural rights? Is it not possible, yea, even probable, that in the convulsions of nations, the threatening danger to crowned heads, and in the demand of the people for their freedom and rights, despotism shall fall as Dagon before the ark of God, autocracy be ground to powder under the millstone of republicanism, wielded for the protec-

tion of all, guaranteeing the equality of all before the law? Is it not probable that the time will come when all nations shall establish their own governments, and wield the governmental powers? The will of all shall be expressed by an unfettered elective franchise. No other government will be tolerated by the people, and all others will be regarded as usurpations.

The most important phase of this subject is its religious and moral relation and aspect—the Church, theology, Christianity. When God by the agency of his Word, Spirit and grace, has renovated the hearts of men, brought them into affiliation with Himself, imbued the mind with love and worship, then we witness the nucleus of an organized Church. Although it may be small at first as mustard seed, yet it has growth, spreading its branches, giving shelter in sunshine and storm to the birds of the air. So the Church, at first, was small in comparison with the wide-spread and hoary kingdoms of the world, far less in number than the devotees of darkness and idolatry; still the Church was able and successful in making conquests and enlarging her dominion. Her progress, at times, may have appeared

slow, and tested the patience of saints, yet her conquests were sure and were maintained. Remarkable have been the conflicts and changes of the Church as she has passed from formalism to religious vitality, from cold and dead ceremonialism to the enjoyment of the life and power of godliness. It is not problematical, but a clear certainty, that the world is better now than it was in former ages. Frantic superstition, base idolatry, bloody persecution, pharisaic exclusiveness, stern opposition against the introduction of the gospel in many nationalities of the earth, have either passed away or become greatly modified, so that the church has free course to glorify the gospel. All massive obstructions, as they once existed and menaced the Church, have melted away, and now the islands of the sea and dark Ethiopia are stretching out their hands of welcome to the missionaries and educators in divine truth.

Changes as great now appear in the system of theology. All theology was stored away in a creed—a mere skeleton of doctrine, a theory of theological opinions—all controversy partook of logomachy: but now theology has had a resurrection unto life; no less bones, but

clothed with muscle, skin and beauty in addition, ready for conquest. Theology now is the faith of saints, regarded as the essential foundation of the beautiful temple of God, erected for worship and to fit souls for glory. A sound and living theology is the strength of the Church, a defense against the storms of time and assaults of enemies. The stand-point of theology, as now understood, permits all denominations to concentrate and affiliate, to some extent, and more than in ages past the hatchet of war is buried, greater unity of views and feeling now prevail. It may seem to some that when the people of God claim and exercise greater freedom, cherish more liberal views in theology, investigate the Bible for themselves and receive doctrines independent of the dictum of the creed, they are treading on dangerous ground, and become guilty of latitudinarianism. But is this position tenable, and will it prove a damage to pure theology? Is it not more than probable that, in the future, creeds will not shackle the mind and faith of the Church as they have done in time past? The Bible will be regarded practically, and not theoretically, as the standard of faith; and then all

theological views shown to be in accord with the word of God will be approved, though in apparent conflict with the teachings of creeds. We concede this is so now by the confession of the religious world, but woe to the theologian who shall dare to put into practice this confession. He will soon incur the lashes of critics and the thunder of condemnation as a heretic. Who does not know that the custom of the past was to gauge, mould and measure man's religious faith and life by creeds hoary with age, in defiance of the right to protest and maintain conscientious feelings and freedom of thought? The pain must be borne, though the creed was as unfitting as a cramping Chinese shoe to the living foot. Shame on the Church and her theologians, if they are not as able, even now more so, to judge for themselves what is the meaning of God's word, what doctrines are vital to salvation when practically cherished and woven in character, as those, who were good and honest men without doubt, who lived centuries ago. Popery may claim the right to do the thinking for the religious world; but Protestantism can never usurp the right, for freedom of thought

is natural and Divine—a law for mental and moral development.

Christianity has fully proved the inherent right for self-existence, the power to repel all invasion, and unsarl the banner of the cross in triumph in all lands. True, the world has witnessed variance in success, at one time success and triumph, and then apparent defeat; now progress, and then retrogression. At one period persecution raged, the blood of saints stained the gibbet and the soil, wailings of distress rent the heavens, God's altars were demolished, caves became the only safe retreats for those who loved and walked with God. These were times of hell's power and success; but there was not a full consummation of the diabolic purpose. If sin was let loose to work mischief and spit its venom on Christianity, and gained vantage over the Church, so the time and occasion were ushered in for God to prove His right to govern the affairs of earth and the destiny of our race, to vindicate the truthfulness of religion, and to turn the battle-strife of earth into victory, to put to flight the army of the aliens, so that one should chase a thousand. God Himself resuscitated his despised cause,

and made the nations quake before His all-subduing power. We see all this in the signs and progress of the great Reformation. It is true, the witnesses stood up and gave the testimony of God, but in sackcloth and ashes they uncovered their heads to vials of wrath of their enemies; they seemingly succumbed before their persecuting power, and lay dead and dishonored for three days and a half in the streets of the city, without burial or human sympathy. The cohorts of darkness and corruption rejoiced in their feasts, sending their congratulations over all the earth and shouts in their carnival, because, as they judged, that religion, the Bible, and the Church, were fully overcome and dead, and they feared no future trouble or warfare. But, lo! just at that time the Spirit of God and of life came down from heaven and breathed into the dead witnesses, and they arose to renew with more strength and effectiveness their testimony for God and the Church, to the astonishment and confusion of the world. Then the Bible was unsealed, the religion of grace and justifying faith was implanted anew in the hearts of the Reformers, the struggle of repentance and a Divine life

was the birth of the Church-reformation. Christianity took deep root and spread; its influence and power were felt among the people. They saw the day-dawn of righteousness coming from the east, advancing in increasing light toward its mid-day glory. The probability is reasonable and strong, that it will shine more and more unto the perfect day.

The Bible, containing the revealed will of God, Divinely inspired and invested with supreme authority over the faith of the world, has a substantial existence. It was given to the church in piecemeal, in due time collected and solidified into one book. For centuries it was copied by scribes, afterward printed and the copies greatly multiplied—so highly prized by the antiquarian, that a copy of the Bible, as first printed, was recently bought for \$8,000. As the art of printing became more perfected, copies of the Bible were more rapidly issued, and now they are multiplied by millions. The distribution of the Bible is as wide-spread and numerous as the falling leaves of autumn. Each successive year opens a broader field for labor, a pressing demand for the word of God, the possibility of issuing an increased number

of copies; so that there is a strong probability that in the not distant future, every family on earth shall own a copy of the Bible. Since God has unsealed the book in the hand of His angel, given it to man to eat, to study, and to understand, in all its sweet and bitter fruit, we have the assurance it shall never be sealed again—become obscure by tradition, or hidden in dead languages, or be suppressed and ostracized by Popish edicts. The word of God is free to every student, and will guide into true freedom of conscience and grace from sin and condemnation. Whom the Son shall make free shall be free indeed. His word giveth light, for in Christ there is no darkness, no error, sin and death. This light shall shine, spread, and illuminate, grow more luminous and brilliant, and penetrate every dark locality of the world. The probability of all this is not based upon mere conjecture, but upon the will and certainty of God, for His counsel shall stand, and His purpose shall be fulfilled.

With the distribution of the Bible goes the benevolent work of missions. No missionary will enter the dark regions of the earth to enlighten, to civilize, and to save the inhabitants,

without the Bible. Where the missionary goes, there the Bible goes. Thus equipped for the work, darkness, superstition, and degradation will disappear, cruelty will retreat, refinement in habits and purity of thought will gain the ascendancy. The missions of the Church in warfare on sin will carry the Bible as the battle-axe of God to demolish the citadels of Satan with great efficiency and success. In the past it was conceded that the world was so sinful and degraded, that to enlighten and to save was a hopeless task ; but now the problem is solved, for the missionary is seen in almost every land, his foot marks the soil of many countries, and his voice is heard amid the confusion of disorder and sin to reprove and instruct in truth. The mission of the Church has proved that there are no insuperable barriers to success in human degradation and wicked resistance—every valley can be traversed and every mountain can be scaled—salvation is offered to all, and all are welcome to come to Christ and live. There is an assured probability that missionary stations will be planted everywhere, that laborers will be multiplied in numbers and be increased in courage and

strength until final conquest. Then the shout on the harvest fields of the world will go up and blend in harmony, joyfully declaring that the kingdoms of earth have become the kingdom of Christ, and that He shall forever reign as King of nations.

The intelligence of the world, knowledge and wisdom, are essential to compass the purposes of God. The universal diffusion of knowledge is vital to enduring civilization, the establishment of the kingdom of God, the conquest of the world. When many go to and fro knowledge will increase, institutions of education will be organized and endowed. These will become fountains of living waters of knowledge, sending forth constant and enlarged streams to fertilize the soil of society and mature the harvest of mental and moral culture. There is an absolute certainty that such institutions will be constantly multiplying and become more effective. What they have done in the past, will indicate what can be done in the future, when established on a firmer basis and made more perfect in machinery. The stream of knowledge and science will enlarge and deepen and spread as a sea of

glory. Since the system of common-schools is adapted to be co-extensive with our race, they will be feeders to our seminaries, colleges and universities, and all contribute to the improvement of our race. There is a probable tendency to a higher standard of education in all our professions, in law, in medicine, and in theology; and this coveted state of education will inevitably conduce to a deeper and a more universal diffusion of knowledge, in the lower order as well as the higher order of society. When we look at the possibilities in this field of operation in the present century, the multiplication of institutions of learning, their large and increasing endowments, their high standard and effectiveness, we may legitimately anticipate a bold and mighty advance in the future. We know not now, but the world shall know.

What do we see in the field in which we now meet, and to which our special attention is invited? What were its moral condition and intellectual status fifty years ago? What is the aspect of the field at the present time? What are the probabilities in the future? Fifty years ago, or more, educational training was

imperfect, in books studied and literary discipline administered. Vital piety was sickly and even less devotional and perfect, and that confined to but few. We could not count many who were really consecrated to the service of God. Thank God there were some; here and there a few stood up for Christ. There was, however, less religion than horse-racing, gambling, revelry and dissipation. But we see improvement for the better in many respects. In the place of two comparatively feeble churches, we have seven congregations and houses of worship. For one pastor then, we have five. We have religious strength, devotion, largely increased numbers and intelligence, fruitful benevolence and grace enriching many hearts. From this vantage ground we now occupy, we have the right to anticipate progress in education and in every department of religious activity and life. The kingdom of God should be built up in greater conformity to the will of God, in the renewal of our spiritual life, greater activity and holiness of heart. The churches should shine in greater effulgence and to the honor of God—forget the past and press forward for higher attainments, so as to partake

more fully of the Divine nature and the precious faith of saints. Even to this gracious state, we should add courage, knowledge, charity, brotherly kindness, self-government, standing firm for God. With such piety we will never be unfruitful, nor forget that we were cleansed. We shall walk with God, enjoy the sunlight of His presence, cherish a bright hope to lead us up to heaven and enter our final rest.

## CERTAINTIES OF THE FUTURE.

REV. M. W. EMPIE.

IT may be asked, What do we know of the future? Of our own knowledge, nothing—and yet by experience, logic, and mathematics, we know a great many things, *i. e.*, we are able to form correct conclusions, and forecast events. We may say, if such and such things continue, then such and such events are sure to follow—*e. g.*, while this world remains, we shall have sunrise and sunset, as in the past, and a succession of day and night, and of the seasons. The moon will wax and wane, and at such particular times and places we shall have eclipses of the sun and of the moon.

So, experimentally, we know that what has been will be—we shall have summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, wet and dry, storm and calm, prosperity and adversity; for, as Solomon says, "*There is no new thing under the sun.*" The human race will be perpetuated indefinitely. As in the past children were born, grew up, married, scattered, bought, sold, reared families, labored, fretted, grew rich, poor, old, and were gathered to the fathers—*so it will be.*

As in the past, dwellings, storehouses, churches, and school-buildings, were built, repaired, decayed, passed away, and were replaced by new and better ones—*so it will be.* As in the past the growth of the good and true was difficult and slow, e. g., fruitful countries, thriving cities, successful business and civil interests—industry, honor, virtue, intelligence, benevolence, piety, etc—while the springing up and increase of noxious ways and vices were rapid and spontaneous—*so it will be.*

Knowledge will increase; wonderful discoveries will continue to be made. Surprising inventions will yet be wrought out, and marked improvements will be made in agriculture,

mechanics, commerce, manufactures, and political economy. The earth's surface will undergo marvelous transformations—hills will be reduced, valleys will be elevated, wildernesses and barren places will be made beautiful and fruitful. Solitary places will become thriving villages and populous cities. Literature, science, art, etc., will grow to astonishing proportions, so that each succeeding generation will pity the stupidity and undeveloped state of the preceding, and glory exceedingly in their own attainments.

From the evident design and tendency of things, there will be great improvements in our social and moral conditions and relations. All these elements are in commotion, promising a better, purer end. There will surely come a higher state of domestic and social life, a more elevated state of business activity, and the moral atmosphere will become more pure and healthful. The soul of man is groaning for this.

In addition to conditional and contingent sources of knowledge respecting future events, we have an infallible and Divine revelation, a "*sure word of prophecy*," which opens to us a

wide door, through which we may look and see many things both of time and eternity clearly revealed. From this source of information we understand

1. That knowledge, benevolence and true religion will increase in the earth, until human and Christian character are fully developed, and the nations of the world live in peace and harmony together.
2. That our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, will be acknowledged and accepted, of all nations and distinctions, as the Messiah—the Son of God, sent into the world as the sufficient and only Redeemer of lost men, (i. e.) Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans, Infidels, etc., will so acknowledge him. "*I will draw all men unto me.*"
3. That the Christian Church will prevail and embrace all people and tongues—"the heathen, and the uttermost parts of the earth." Technical names and distinctions will gradually be lost, "as star by star declines in morning's dawn," and there will be one fold and one Shepherd.
4. That this world shall cease to be—nature's wheels will cease to roll—and the heavens and

the earth that now are will vanish away. They will either be annihilated, or so renewed and refined by fire, as to constitute a new heaven and a new earth, as the Lord will.

5. With the end of the world, the human race will no longer be propagated. All the dead will be raised to life again—and they, together with the generation then alive, shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from natural to spiritual, from mortal to immortal; and henceforth, the resurrection body glorified and the disembodied spirit shall be reunited, and dwell forever in the state for which they are fitted in this life time. The "righteous," in God's account, shall be forever holy and happy in heaven; while the unrighteous in His account shall be forever sinful and miserable in hell.

*Finally,* We who are here now, actors in life's drama, as the fathers were before us, will in our turn pass away, and our places will be occupied by successors, who in due time again will make room for others. Wherefore seeing we look for such things, let us be diligent that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless. "Therefore beloved, see-

*ing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."*

## CLOSING EXERCISES.

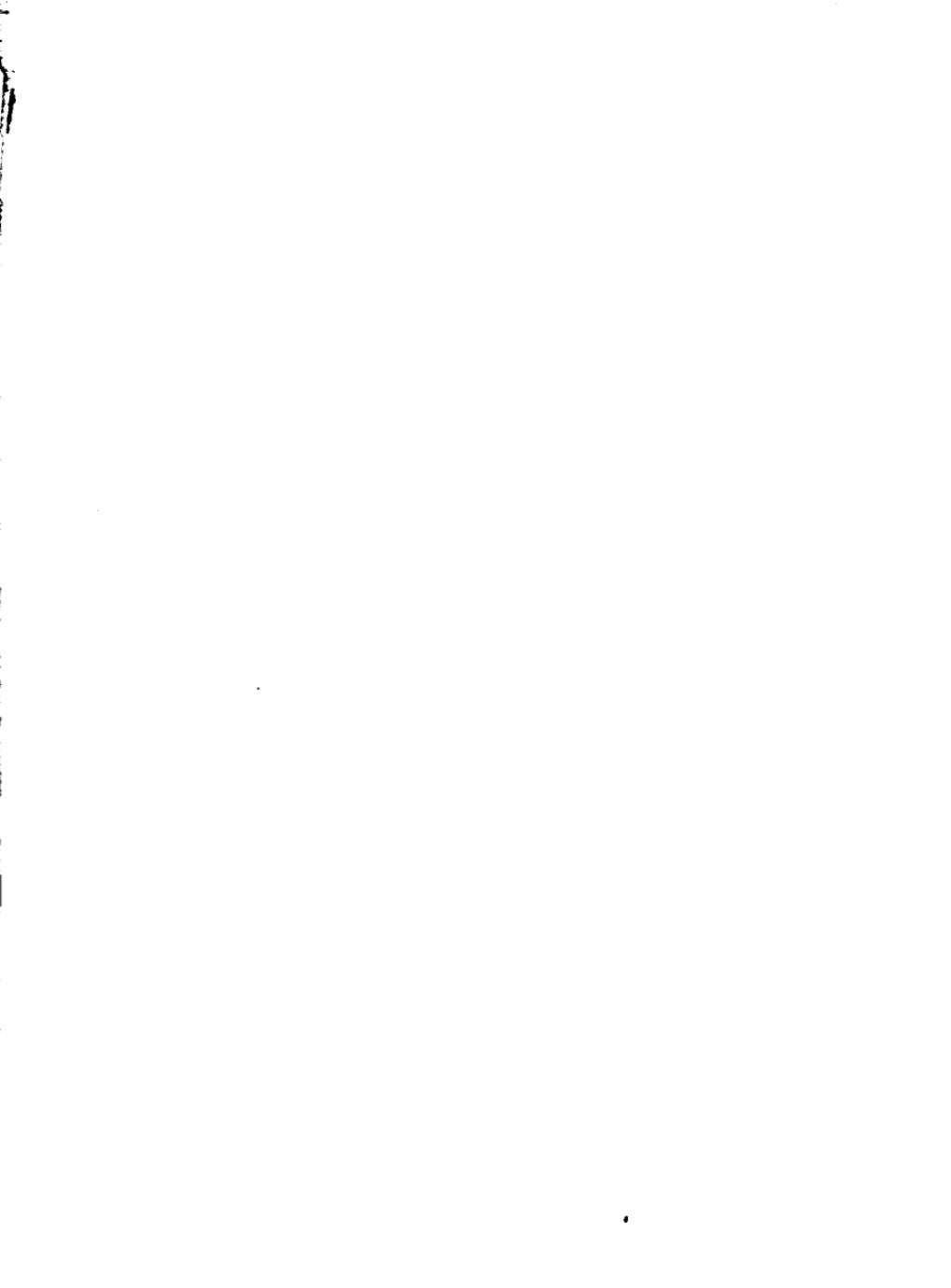
These were intended to occupy the evening, but during the entire day the weather was unpropitious. The collation, which was to have been provided in the grove, was partaken of in the church; and, as the falling rain forbade an evening gathering, the closing exercises were engaged in during the afternoon. The Pastor's parting words are crowded out for want of room. All the last utterances were impressive. The singing, with which the services were interspersed, was appropriate, and especially the closing piece. It was a moment of sublime interest. The thoughts and emotions of that scene will be lasting as life.

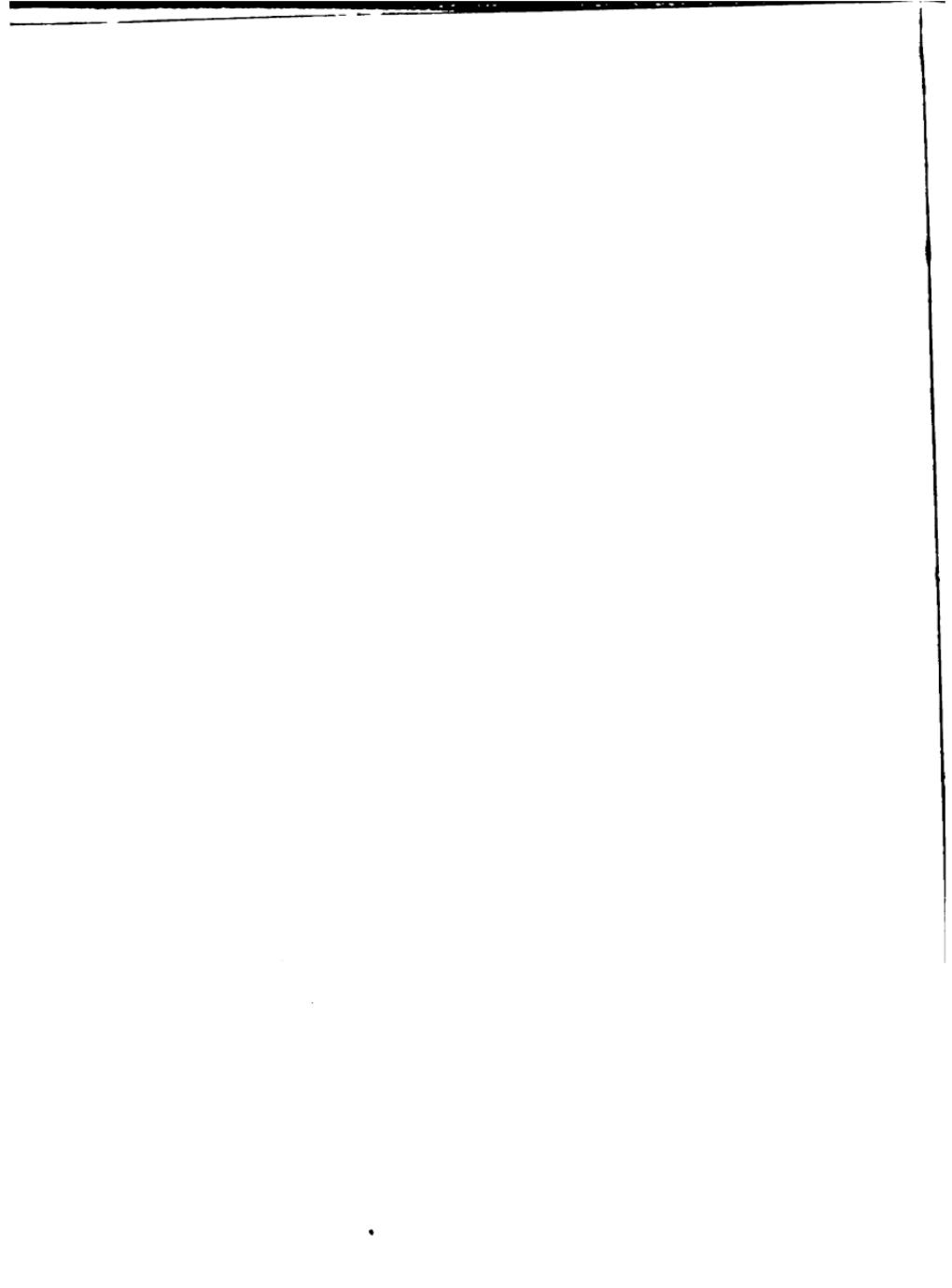
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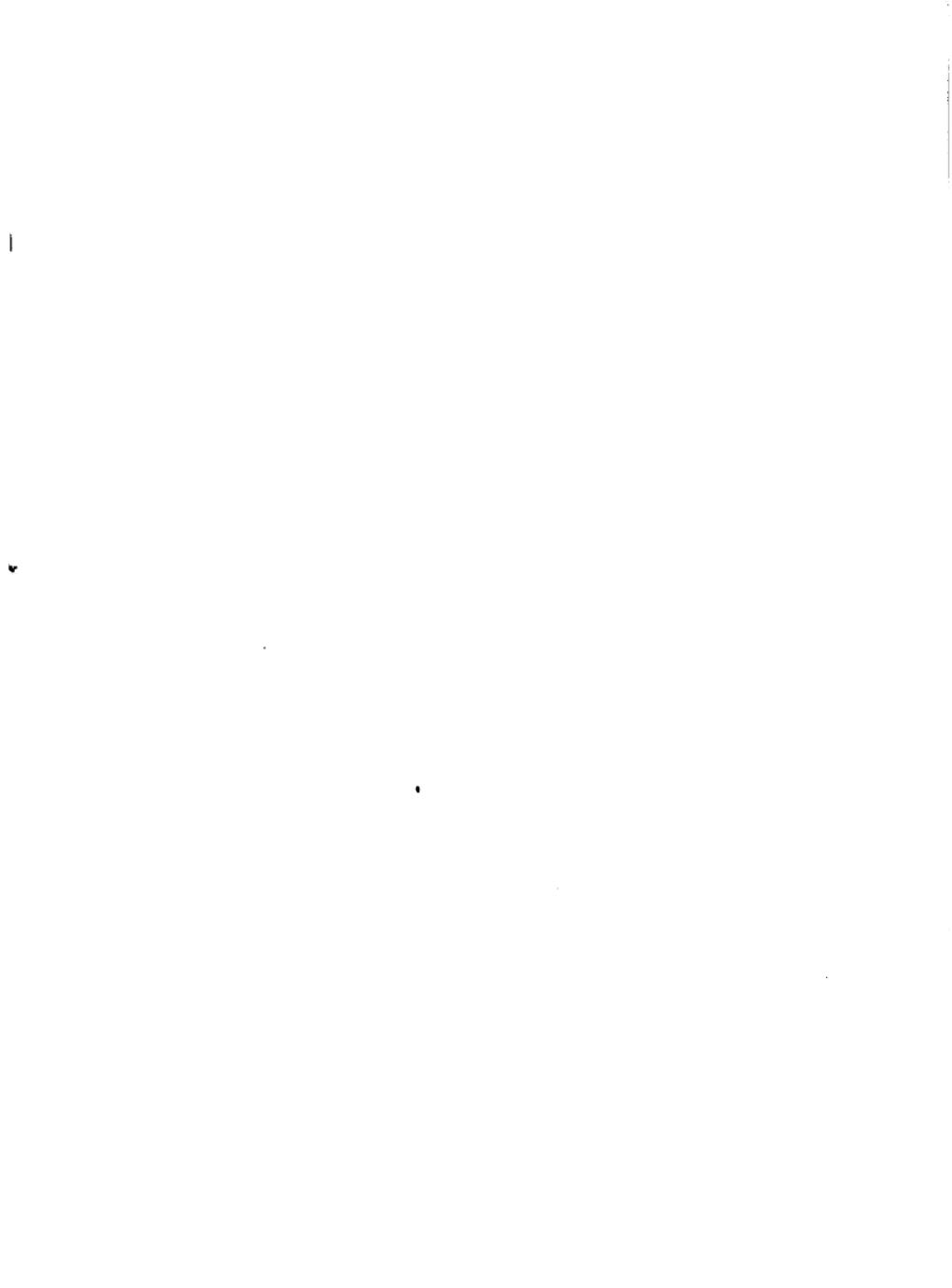
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